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MR. CLODD AND HIS FRIENDS.

"Memories." By Edward Clodd. (Chapman and Hall.) 10s. 6d. net.

The apothegm which Mr. Clodd has chosen for his title-page is borrowed, not from Aristotle or Epictetus, but from Smith Minor, "A friend is a chap who knows you know everything about, but you likes him all the same." "Memories" is indeed a book of friendship, though it is not without a pungent seasoning of hostility against all such "superstitious absurdities," such "abracadabra of ritual," such faiths and rites "obviously primitive" as Mr. Clodd considers, if not mere "Tom Tit Tot," then "Myths and Dreams." The friend Mr. Clodd tells us least about in a volume which he asks us to accept as just "a fireside talk," frank and informal, broken and discursive, is the one whom he has known longest, and, being a wise man, best—himself; though the others his memory lingers on, the letters they inspired, and the work and leisure they helped to strengthen, sweeten and vivify, reflect a pronounced personality.

There is, however, one brief introductory chapter of autobiography. Mr. Clodd tells us that he comes of old English sailor and farmer stock. His own voyages and adventures have not been on the high seas, but in books. His childhood was spent at Aldeburgh. In those early days, he is thankful to say, unlike the present generation, he was taught to read the Bible, though it took him many years to discover the supreme value of what he describes—not with desperate destructiveness—as a "miscellaneous collection of writings of unsettled authorships and often of uncertain meaning." None the less, it was not the Bible so much as "Meditations among the Tombs" and certain "priggish and pitiful" hymns on the one hand, and the "Penny Cyclopædia," "Peter Parley's Annual," and "Buffon's Natural History" on the other, that bent his mind, gave it a bias, in certain directions. An eternal hell allured his childish heart as little as an everlasting heaven. The Victorian era was the apotheosis of the British Sabbath, and perhaps served the cause of honest doubt far more effectively than half the creeds. In his youth Mr. Clodd was intended, by the mother he devotedly loved, to become a Baptist minister, just as Ruskin's parents aspired to his some day being a Bishop. But on a visit to the Great Exhibition in 1851 he fell in love with London, and consequently jilted the ministry. To London he came four years afterwards, for good, quickly mounting to eminence "in the prosaic service of Juno Moneta." He read and he read—Carlyle, Darwin, Meredith, and the rest; sermons unnumberable he sat out, under preachers "now for the most part forgotten, who were a power in their day." But here again, in an age when Nonconformistism was the reverse of flabby and had many grievances to keep it sweet, it was on the one side Chalmers's "Astronomical Discourses," "The Origin of Species," and Kerchoff's and Bunsen's "Spectrum Analysis"; and, on the other, "Essays and Reviews," "Ecce Homo" (described by "that gentlest of men," the Earl of Shaftesbury, as "the most pestilential volume ever vomited from the jaws of hell"), and the works of the notorious Bishop Colenso, "who had a Zulu for a pal," which at last persuaded him to be an Agnostic. They tempted him to repeat with caustic persistency such rather rudimentary inquiries as, Who was Cain's wife? and Whether children should be taught that all the people who came into the world after the Fall would, "save eight persons, act so wickedly as to cause God to drown them"?:

> Perhaps I have said enough to explain how I came to write "The Childhood of the World." . . . I do not regret that this was done while I was still a Theist, because this secured the book a hearing which it would certainly have lacked had it been written from an Agnostic standpoint. As it was, it "caught on." It found a large public, not only here, but in America, where several pirate publishers captured it. Application for permission to translate it into Continental languages . . . followed; then into some "heathen" tongues; and what gave me special satisfaction, a request to allow it to be embossed for the blind. . . .

Mr. Clodd does not say whether on this score he was ever, like Newman, taunted with Jesuitism. "Of the immediate personal," he adds, "little more need be said." Nothing, indeed, could be clearer in this book than Mr. Clodd's intense interest in questions of religion. His zeal far surpasses that of the orthodox. He describes his friend Moncure Conway as "passing from creed to creed, each being in turn more liberal than the one abandoned." A schoolboy paying tribute to an uncle's tips could not be more ecstatic. With a profound indignation he refutes the assertion that Romanes or Huxley or George Gissing changed their faith in their last days. "The lie must be nailed to the counter." When he tells how "the death of a darling boy" enkindled a hope of immortality in Richard Proctor's mind, that hope is dismissed as a perversion. Alfred Russel Wallace's psychicalism is merely "his credulous way." As for Sir Oliver Lodge, "one can only sigh and say, 'Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone.'" The unkindest cut of all, however, is reserved for a friend who has also lately published a delightful volume of reminiscence. Mr. Clodd tells us that Mr. Edward Carpenter in his later life was convinced of the existence of the soul by the curious and seductive fact that "the body weighs three-quarters of an ounce less immediately after death." The delicious comment on this endearing little naïveté must be given in full. "But Edward Carpenter, to whose 'Civilisation, its Cause and Cure,' and 'Love's Coming of Age,' I desire to pay tribute, is a man of poetic temperament, he carries no weight in scientific matters."

Mr. Clodd's "Memories," perhaps, carry rather too much weight in controversial matters. Even acrimony is not entirely absent. But we hasten to add that otherwise they are almost as crowded with jests as was Yorick's skull. Mr. Clodd enormously enjoys a good story. That enjoyment, alas! one is tempted to think, is almost as Victorian as was the indignation of our grandmothers at the thought of a family tree capable of affording shelter to "the missing link." Not all Mr. Clodd's witticisms are of sovereign merit. Many are pointed, some are blunt, a few, we regret to say, must be left for the reader's own privy discovery. Louis Becke's authentic photograph of a "converted" Australian blackfellow is one that will not amuse everybody, but then not everybody is capable of being amused. Next best of its kind is the letter which a late Rector of Boulge addressed to Mr. Clodd as representative of the Omar Khayyám Club, when that versatile and elect confraternity pleaded for permission to plant a rosebush or two from the tomb of their remote founder above the last resting-place of Edward Fitzgerald.

Another little prize with a literary tinge has been borrowed from Professor Ward Howe:

> An Englishman travelling for the first time to the "hub of culture" (the flattering term has ceased to be applicable) asked the ticket collector, as the train neared the station, whether it was Boston. "Yes, sir." "Well, I am wondering, because I hear an odd sort of hum as of a big city, but it is unlike any other." "Yes, sir; what you hear is the Bostonians reading Browning."

An appendix to this is supplied by Grant Allen, who in one of his novels remarked that Browning was "splendid for the nerves." A day or two after a sufferer inquired:

> Dear Sir,—Pardon the liberty I am taking. In your clever story of "The Great Ruby Robbery" you mention Browning being splendid for the nerves. Is there such a thing, would you give me the address to obtain? I am a dreadful sufferer of nervousness. Under such circumstances will you accept my apology for troubling?

But Mr. Clodd's duff is fully and richly as entertaining as his plums. He was, at least, catholic in friendship, and delights in its ritual. Huxley and Andrew Lang; Spencer and Meredith; George Gissing and Holman Hunt; H. W. Bates and Samuel Butler; the voluble, excitable Lady Burton and her spooks, the gay, the gallant, the adorable Mary Kingsley and her Ju-jus—one by one he recalls men and women so diverse and independent as these, and a score of others, to remembrance. There is no plan in his book. He talks as fancy leads or caprice suggests. On religion, the queen bee, so to speak, in a revered bonnet, perhaps Charles Anderson, once the eccentric Vicar of St. John's, Limehouse, comes to the wisest conclusion, apropos of such utterly different human beings as Huxley and Newman:

> What man is, what he will be, what is well for him, what is possible for him, all this gets quite another answer from these opposite attitudes of inquiry. Each system offers its own admixture of loss and gain. . . . Unhappily, at the present moment we are firmly seated *nowhere*—but tend to fall between the two stools. We have neither the faith, poetry, and moral force of the supernatural past, nor the sound logic, social axioms, and easy fatalism of the scientific future.

That was in 1888. As regards philosophy, the loveliest little thing in the book comes from J. Allanson Picton's "Religions of the Universe." "Sir," inquired a little girl of him once, "please tell me why there was ever anything at all?" "My dear," I replied, "I really do not know, but here the things are, and we must make the best of them."

1923

Local Topics.

A Notable Aldborian.

A long and eulogistic article in last week's "Nation," celebrates the 50th anniversary of the publication of a great little book entitled "The Childhood of the World."

This work was probably the first attempt to explain in a simple yet graphic manner, the genesis and evolution of the World, from a scientific point of view, as opposed to the traditional and legendary one.

Its circulation, continued down to the present day, has been phenomenal, and is the product of our highly esteemed fellow citizen Edward Clodd.

Mr. Clodd is certainly the most eminent literary author that Aldeburgh has produced since the time of the Poet Crabbe; and we hope that for many years to come we shall still see him in summer steering his yacht Lotus II on the waters of his beloved river Alde, and taking the same active interest in the welfare of the town, which he always has done.

Strafford House,
Aldeburgh,
Suffolk.

16.3.17

My dear Mr. Clark

Many thanks for sending me your interesting article, which, though I don't know much about Chemistry, I don't know the local news, as I don't buy the local paper.

Your Eagle Eye has detected what I have never seen, and what in a hurried walk this morning I failed to detect. But my wife is also put on the Qui vive and she will help me in that.

As a boy, I remember the "Hundred Rivers", which we called the "Haven", deserved its name. But now seems displayed the world grows less picturesque.

Yours truly
E. Richard

Levy E. Clark, Esq.

MEMORIES

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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MEMORIES

BY

EDWARD CLODD

"A friend is a chap what you knows everything about, but you likes him all the same."—*Smith Minor.*

WITH PORTRAITS

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TO

MY COMRADE-WIFE

PREFATORY NOTE

Friends whose judgment I value have said that a duty lies upon me to set down impressions of some men and women whom it has been my privilege to know more or less intimately. Otherwise, I should not have put pen to paper.

If I can make the reader who cares to dip into these pages feel that he and I are having a fireside talk about those of whom portrayal is attempted, my purpose will be achieved. Two reasons prompt me to add a good many letters, (1) because they contain matters of varied interest with which the writers deal familiarly, and (2) because they give me warrant to say with York Powell : " I have met men I am proud to think about," and, I would add with him, that " if they have cared for me half as much as I have cared for them, I have not been badly loved."

E. C.

Strafford House, Aldeburgh,
September 1916.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I	A FRAGMENT OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY	1
II	GRANT ALLEN	21
III	W. K. CLIFFORD	37
	T. H. HUXLEY	40
	SIR HENRY THOMPSON	46
IV	HERBERT SPENCER	50
V	SIR WILLIAM HUGGINS	54
	R. A. PROCTOR	56
VI	H. W. BATES	63
	JOSEPH THOMSON	69
	PAUL B. DU CHAILLU	71
VII	MARY HENRIETTA KINGSLEY	75
VIII	EDWARD WHYMPER	83
IX	WILLIAM SIMPSON	86
X	EDWARD FITZGERALD	92
XI	SIR ALFRED COMYN LYALL	99
XII	J. COTTER MORISON	111
XIII	F. YORK POWELL	122
	SIR JOHN RHŶS	131
	SIR LAURENCE GOMME	134
XIV	GEORGE MEREDITH	138

		PAGE
XV	GEORGE GISSING	165
XVI	W. HOLMAN-HUNT	196
XVII	ANDREW LANG	207
XVIII	F. HINDES GROOME	217
XIX	J. A. PICTON	227
	MONCURE D. CONWAY	237
XX	REV. CHARLES VOYSEY	243
XXI	REV. CHARLES ANDERSON	248
	SAMUEL BUTLER	254
XXII	ELIZA LYNN LINTON	264
XXIII	DR. GEORGE BIRD	270
	SIR RICHARD AND LADY BURTON	271
	SIR B. W. RICHARDSON	271
	PAUL BLOUËT	273
	GEORGE W. CABLE	274
	L. F. AUSTIN	276
XXIV	PROFESSOR A. VAN MILLINGEN	278
	INDEX	283

LIST OF PORTRAITS

	To face page
GRANT ALLEN	20
T. H. HUXLEY	40
P. B. DU CHAILLU	70
MARY H. KINGSLEY	74
SIR ALFRED LYALL	98
J. COTTER MORISON	110
A NATIVE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN	124
GEORGE MEREDITH	138
GEORGE GISSING	164
ANDREW LANG	206
SAMUEL BUTLER	254
ELIZA LYNN LINTON	264

MEMORIES

I

A Fragment of Autobiography

I was born at Margate on the first of July 1840. The brig of which my father was captain traded between that port and the North. My parents lived in Queen Street, Margate, till my early childhood, when they removed to Aldeburgh, of which town both were natives. I come of sailor and farmer stock. The ancestors on my father's side lived, some at Parham and some at Framlingham; my maternal grandfather was a Greenland whaler. Among the scanty memories of boyhood I recall one item of interest. In May 1845 Sir John Franklin's ships, the *Erebus* and *Terror*, anchored in Aldeburgh Bay. My father went on board the *Erebus*, and talking with Sir John about the difficulties to be met when he reached the vast ice region, the "heroic sailor soul" said, "If I can't cut through it, I'll bite it."

Tables whether of long or short descent have never greatly interested me; compared to the time of man's tenure of the earth they are all so recent! To trace his divergence, and that of the ape, from a common stem through an ageless past, and to learn the story of the tribulation through which man has entered into his kingdom, is to me a more fascinating subject than search after pedigrees.[1]

[1] Writing to a friend on the like matter, Huxley says: "My own genealogical inquiries have taken me so far back that I confess the later stages do not interest me."—*Life and Letters*, Vol. II. p. 5.

But I must confess to a certain quickening of interest in my ancestry when I learnt that my earthborn name is as old as it is rare. Staying with the late Felix Cobbold, he said to me, " Your name goes a long while back in Suffolk." In proof of this he showed me an entry—*Subsidy Returns of the County of Suffolk* in 1327. Villata de Otteleye (Otley) Carlford Hundred. Johanne Clod, XII pence. Also, with a leap of more than three centuries, in the *Hearth Tax Rates for Suffolk* in 1674, one Charles Clod of Debenham, assessed. Enough. Under these dusty records let

" The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

Seventy years ago, Aldeburgh, now the haunt of golfers and yachtsmen, retained many of the features of an old fishing and smuggling port which are described with the minuteness and fidelity of a Dutch painting in Crabbe's *Borough*. The nearest station on the Eastern Counties Railway, as it was then named, was at Ipswich, twenty-four miles distant; hence passengers, parcels and newspapers were dependent on the coach that plied daily between the two places. My memory recalls how, in 1854, when the Crimean War was raging, we schoolboys used to assemble at the Reading Room to await the arrival of *The Times*, from which the Vicar read the news to our excited ears. When, many years later, taking a trip up the Gulf of Finland, I saw the fortresses of Sveaborg and Cronstadt, the past came back to me with a strange vividness.

As for books, they were far to seek in any number. The Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Holy War*, Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*, Hervey's *Meditations among the Tombs* and some odd missionary magazines, complete the serious list. I consider myself fortunate that

it did not include the *Lives of Eminent Christians* in twelve volumes and the series of death-bed scenes entitled *The Family Sepulchre* which my friend Nevinson tells us, in his delightful *Between the Acts*, were among the Sunday books of his boyhood. But then Hervey was a host in himself!

As for the secular, there were, to the joy of a boy avid for reading, some volumes of the *Penny Encyclopædia*, *Peter Parley's Annual*, a small edition of Buffon's *Natural History* and a few school prizes, among which were *Scenes and Sketches from the Bible* and Maria Hack's (she was a sister of Bernard Barton, whose daughter Edward FitzGerald married) *Lectures at Home*. I have heard my mother say that she was one of the crowd of girls who cried over *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded;* but that ponderous novel had disappeared from our shelves, and neither fiction nor fairy tales found a place on them. Nor was there a Shakespeare.

Of course, all worldly books and toys were *tabu* on Sunday. That day was filled by morning and evening attendances at chapel, and afternoons at the Sunday school, where we sang, among other hymns, one whose unintended effect is the manufacture of prigs.

"I thank the goodness and the grace
Which on my birth has smiled,
And made me in this Christian land
A happy English child.

I was not born as thousands are
Where God is never known,
And taught to pray a useless prayer,
To blocks of wood and stone.

My God, I thank Thee, who hast planned
A better lot for me,
And placed me in this happy land
Where I can hear of Thee."

But the priggish and the pitiful were blended. The missionary box was always under our eyes, and in our ears the lesson of our debt to heathen countries for all the nice things which came from them. What better could we do than imitate the pattern set in a recent American hymn-book for Young Helpers?

> "Now, thought little Jack,
> What can I send back
> To these lands for their presents to me?
> The Bible, indeed,
> Is all that they need,
> So that shall go over the sea."

The religion taught me was in truth "the fear of the Lord"; the object being to frighten me into being good through threat, even for venial sins, of an eternal hell

> "Where sinners must with devils dwell
> In darkness, fire and chains."

As for heaven the attractive prospect to a high-spirited boy was of a place

> "Where congregations ne'er break up,
> And Sabbaths have no end,"

while his wholesome zest in life, feeling "it in every limb," was to be stifled by the maudlin wish in the Sunday school hymn—

> "I want to be an angel,
> And with the angels stand,
> A crown upon my forehead,
> And a harp within my hand."

Happily, once challenged, a spurious religion of that sort yields to revolt of the reason and to the sense of justice which is strong in a child. I cannot remember that the creed I was taught was ever very real to me.

Strict as was the discipline, and narrow as was the teaching, both were begotten of anxious care for the spiritual well-being of the child. Looking back, one sees that there was compensation in the knowledge gained of the contents of the Bible and in the committal of large portions of it to memory. For that I cannot be too thankful. But it was not until the time of my escape in early manhood from the theory (nowadays confined to the illiterate) that the Bible is inspired in every word and letter—an inspiration which would be worthless if it did not include all the translations—that I realized the supreme value of that miscellaneous collection of writings of unsettled authorships and often of uncertain meaning.[1]

Those who may have read what I have written elsewhere will not suspect me of any recantation when I say that the neglect into which the study of the Bible

[1] There are scarcely any two great branches of the Christian Church which are even agreed as to what constitutes the Bible.—*The Bible, its Meaning and Supremacy,* by F. W. Farrar, Dean of Canterbury.

"Explain it how we may, there was something in the Hebrew genius which enabled it to express the moral and spiritual experiences of successive ages in forms which had a singular attractiveness for the mixed races with whom lay the moulding of the future world. That its history was false, its morality often imperfect, and in its earlier records repugnant, is now extensively admitted. My final word is that the Bible is not dead but has an indefinite if not immortal life before it; for the entire abandonment of supernatural claims, so far from lessening its influence, will confirm and extend it."—*Man and the Bible,* J. A. Picton, p. 315.

What will be the attitude of mind towards the Bible on the part of boys and girls who are asked to explain such fatuities as the reforms in religion made by Jehu and Joash; who are Baruch, Huldah and Necho; and how Athaliah and Josiah died? These questions are copied from a list set by a fool of an examiner whose folly, though he were "brayed in a mortar,"[2] could not be squeezed out of him. 'Tis pedants of this type that cause their pupils to associate the Bible with all that is arid and repellent and to throw it aside when they leave school.

has fallen nowadays is matter for grave concern. Where used at all in schools, it is made a vehicle of dogmatic teaching, while in most families it is never read at all. If you quote it, people look puzzled as to whether your quotation comes from it, or from Sterne or Shakespeare. So the generation is growing up the poorer in remaining ignorant, to cite Huxley (whom none can charge with Bibliolatry), "of a book that has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English History; that is written in the noblest and purest English and abounds in exquisite beauties of mere literary form." [1]

I was first sent to a dame school, where the lesson-books were well-nigh as primitive as the horn-books which they had not wholly superseded. For as late as 1845 these were in use in schools in the Midlands. Shenstone thus describes them in the *School-mistress :*

> "Eftsoons the Urchins to their Tasks repair,
> Their Books of Stature small they take in hand,
> Which with pellucid horn securéd are
> To save from Fingers wet the Letters fair."

In due time I passed to the Aldeburgh Grammar school, of which Mr. Buck was master. "A dominie man!—an auld dominie, wha keepit a schule and caa'ed it an acaademy!" Long gathered to his fathers, there remains a debt of abiding gratitude to Joseph Buck. He caned us, but we were none the worse for that. He was of the class of teachers, always rare, who instilled into his scholars a love of learning for its own sake. He practised the motto *Non multa sed multum.* Outside the three R's, the subjects included only Geography, Grammar, English and Roman History and Latin, in all of which the boys were well grounded. Any idea

[1] *Collected Essays,* Vol. III. p. 398.

of teaching science was yet unborn. Athletics played a small part in school life in those days. Bathing in the sea or the river, baseball and fights between the boys of the "acaademy" and the National School—these, fanned by the rivalries between the Up-Towners and Down-Towners, into which factions the small town was divided—completed the list of amusements, for amusement there was in fisticuffs with result of bloody noses.

To my schoolmaster and to my mother—of blessed memory—keen-witted and herself eager to know whatever can be known, I owe, in Gibbon's oft-quoted words, "that early and invincible love of reading which I would not exchange for the treasures of India." As I have spoken of my training in a narrow orthodoxy, I am moved to say that my mother's receptive and elastic mind gave her escape from the creed of early years, and, as showing what broad sympathies moved her to the last, among her dying words were those of regret that she could not live to know that the innocence of Dreyfus, of which she had no doubt, would be established.

I rejoice that, living to a great age, she came to know many of my friends; I treasure the letters which some of them wrote to me when she died; these paying tribute to her intelligence and charm.

It was my parents' hope, I may add of that devotional age, their prayer, that I should become a minister of the Gospel, as the phrase went. Their wish was the deeper because, as the only surviving child of seven, they desired to dedicate me to the service of their Master. The Baptist preacher whose chapel we attended fostered the idea. He set me to write little sermons on given texts, which he read and corrected,

and whatever trend towards scribbling I then had was further encouraged by him in setting me papers on such ambitious subjects as the "Abolition of Slavery" and the "Character of Oliver Cromwell." The Baptists were among the active sects in sending anti-slavery missionaries to America, and the fact that our minister's brother had been nearly killed by a mob of slave-owners only added to a zeal which he infused into us to free the negro from his fetters. We meant business! We boys of the Sunday school read and solemnly discussed our several essays at an "improvement class" held weekly in the chapel schoolroom, when the minister presided.

But, all unwittingly, the hopes of parents and parson were dashed to pieces when my mother took me to see the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park in 1851. To a boy of eleven, whose farthest jaunts had been on holidays to relatives at Framlingham, this was to enter a wonderland which surpassed all that his mind could conceive. It made me secretly resolve, whatever might block the way, to get to London when I left school. Paying a visit there to an uncle and aunt in the spring of 1855, I seized a chance to offer myself as clerk to an accountant in Cornhill. Laying stress on my rawness, he stipulated that I should serve him six months for nothing. Hence, needful draft on the family purse, and, what was still more needful, my parents' consent to my sitting on a stool instead of standing in a pulpit. This they reluctantly gave.

It is easy to be tedious and brief at the same time, and perchance I may avoid the former if I skip altogether some dry details as to the three employers whom I served between 1855 and 1862, when I obtained a clerkship in the London Joint Stock Bank. Ten years

after that I was promoted to the Secretaryship, from which position I retired in June 1915.

Life in London brought the gain of another and far wider outlook and especially supplemented the deficiencies of boyhood by putting me in touch with good libraries. Among these, that of the Birkbeck Institute gave welcome opportunity for study in various branches. I devoured books on science and history, and read on a heap of miscellaneous subjects. Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* and *Past and Present* were tonics to me. But I did not care, and never have cared, for metaphysics. They were to me, to quote the Book of Job, as "the filling of the belly with the east wind." Jowett said that "we should learn enough about them as will enable the mind to get rid of them." . . . "They destroy the power of observation and of acquiring knowledge."[1] Lectures were more the order of the day than they now are, and the town was rich in preachers round whom congregations thronged. As a rule, amusements were too costly for frequent indulgence, but now and again the purse did allow a whole or a half evening[2] at the Haymarket or Sadler's Wells or the Adelphi. At the Haymarket, Buckstone was the great draw; at the Adelphi I saw Madame Celeste, then an old woman, in *The Green Bushes*. At Sadler's Wells, *The Hunchback*, *The Love Chase* and other plays by James Sheridan Knowles were often performed. He afterwards became a Baptist preacher and wrote books against Popery! I heard him preach in Cross Street Chapel, Islington,

[1] *Life and Letters*, Vol. II. p. 109.

[2] In those days one was admitted to the theatre at nine o'clock, when the play was half over, by paying half price. Horace Walpole speaks of the riots at Covent Garden and Drury Lane theatres because of the refusal of the managers to admit spectators at half price after the third act.—*Letter* 863, Vol. I. p. 289 (Toynbee's Edition).

and can recall his vivid and dramatic reading of the parable of the Prodigal Son as the lesson before the sermon. The actor survived in the reader.

In the matter of church and chapel going my Sundays were usually " well spent." I heard, one after another, preachers now for the most part forgotten, who were a power in their day. Among these were Thomas Binney, Newman Hall, Alexander Raleigh, Canon Liddon, James Martineau (of whom more anon) and, not least of the company, Frederick Denison Maurice and Dr. Jowett, whose heresies incited the bolder clergy to invite him to their pulpits. Among these were Dean Stanley and the Rev. William Rogers of Bishopsgate, known as " Hang Theology Rogers."

Later on, friendship with Mark Wilks, Allanson Picton, Moncure Conway and Charles Voysey drew me, as the phrase goes, to " sit under " them occasionally. To tell of this is to recall a time when the spacious Nonconformist chapels of London were crowded with eager hearers. There was then no need of posters on hoardings or of limelight shows to draw men and women to places of worship now kept going by these and other artificial attractions. Not long before his death, Mark Wilks—staunchest of friends, most lovable of men and most eloquent and broad-minded of preachers—said to me : " We Nonconformists are getting flabby. We have no grievances left; our political and religious disabilities are removed, and there is nothing left about which to fight. Any troubles we may have are from within and not from without. So the one excitement we have left us is when some daring brother preaches doctrines other than those that are set down in the trust deed of the chapel of which he is pastor. Then the trustees, if they are orthodox, try to eject him. And with the

advance of the younger generation of Dissenters in the social scale there is, on the one hand, drifting towards the Church of England as more respectable, or, on the other hand, blank indifferentism."

Books, more than all; next to these, sermons and lectures, started me on lines of reflection which, ultimately, were fatal to the creed taught in boyhood. But the approach to the terminus reached in later years was very slow.

The boy must be dull of eye who, living in a flat country, is not impressed by the spectacle of the rising and movements of the stars, and the succession of their constellations which these afford. I loved to watch them and learn their names. Hence an early interest in astronomy. Maria Hack's book set me on the making of a rude telescope with cardboard tubes, the lenses for which I bought from the local watchmaker. When, later on, Chalmer's *Astronomical Discourses* came into my hands, I revelled in the book. To this, some time after, followed the reading of the *Bridgewater Treatises* and other books whose titles I cannot recall. But all of them had, as their main theme, " The power, wisdom and goodness of God manifested in the Creation." They started certain lines of thought, and were a sort of sliding scale towards unorthodox views. As I have just said, the arrival was slow. Even Darwin's *Origin of Species*, which came out when I was reading Bell *On the Hand*, was not a greatly disturbing force, because, after only hinting that his theory " would throw light on the origin of man and his history," he added that " there is grandeur in the view of life with its several powers having originally been breathed by the Creator into a few forms or only one."

Only those who were on the threshold of full manhood

in the sixties of the last century can realize through what a *Sturm und Drang* period they passed. It was good, and, more than that, it was a glorious thing to be alive. It was an epoch not of Reform, but of Revolution: old things were passing away; all things were becoming new.

1859—*Annus mirabilis*—saw the publication of Darwin's book, about which everybody knows nowadays, and of Kirchoff's and Bunsen's *Spectrum Analysis*, not so well known, but a book revealing the story of the same stuff of which all things in heaven and earth are spun. It is interesting to note, by the way, that the same year gave us *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* and *Adam Bede*.

In June 1860, at the meeting of the British Association at Oxford, there was a memorable duel between Huxley and Bishop Wilberforce on the question of man's fundamental relationship to the great apes. Of course the bishop knew nothing about the subject, but he had been coached by Sir Richard Owen, who had contended that there are marked differences between the brains of man and ape. Owen was proved by Huxley to be in the wrong, but he never admitted it.[1] Huxley had an easy task in demolishing the specious arguments of the bishop, but the excitement in theological circles caused by the discussion remained at fever heat until another shock diverted attention elsewhere.

This was delivered by no foe outside the camp, but by six clergymen and one lay member of the Church of England—*septem contra Christum*, as they were labelled. Under the innocent title of *Essays and Reviews*, these seven published a series of papers of so heterodox a character—as heterodoxy then went—as to create an

[1] See p. 129.

agitation of whose force and fury the present generation can have no conception. From Archbishop to pew-opener every Churchman lost his head. Oddly enough, the warning note as to the dangerous tendencies of the book was sounded by Mr. Frederic Harrison, a disciple of Comte, in an article on "Neo-Christianity" in the *Westminster Review* of October 1860. The heavy guns of the orthodox Reviews and the lighter artillery of the religious papers were levelled on the Essayists. Two of them, Dr. Williams and Mr. Wilson, were haled before the ecclesiastical courts and suspended from their livings for a year. But these sentences were reversed on appeal by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, when the Lord Chancellor, Baron Westbury, delivered his famous judgment that it was not heretical for a clergyman to deny the doctrine of eternal punishment. Mr. Bowen, afterwards Lord Bowen, wrote on the margin of his copy of the Chancellor's deliverance: "Hell dismissed with costs."[1] The addition to this laconic comment was that the judgment had deprived the British Churchman of his sure and certain hope of the everlasting damnation of the wicked. This was in 1864. But in 1862 there was still "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion," since a troubler came this time in the person of a Bishop. Colenso's *Critical Examination of the Pentateuch* challenged the historical accuracy of those documents, bringing upon its author a sentence of deposition from his see of Natal by his Metropolitan, an act which the Privy Council declared to be null and void.

But the commotion made by the Essayists and the Bishop was mild compared with that which was stirred by the publication of *Ecce Homo* in 1865. It came out

[1] Jowett's *Life and Letters*, Vol. I. p. 302.

anonymously, and, drolly enough, its authorship was attributed to persons as different as the Archbishop of York, Napoleon the Third, the Poet Laureate, George Eliot, and the Master of Trinity! As is now known, it was written by the late Sir John Seeley, Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge. No ecclesiastical court could touch *him! Ecce Homo* sent a shudder through every sect in Christendom; through Nonconformists as well as Churchmen, for these had also proved themselves eager heresy-hunters in expelling one of their Professors for "unsound" views about the Old Testament. That the Incarnate God the Son, the Saviour of Mankind, should be described as "a young man of promise, popular with those who knew him and appearing to enjoy the Divine favour"[1] so infuriated the orthodox that, refutation lacking, the only weapons hurled at the head of the blasphemous author were the usual expletives. That gentlest of men and most unselfish philanthropist, the Earl of Shaftesbury, was moved to denounce *Ecce Homo* as "the most pestilential volume ever vomited from the jaws of hell."

Yes, they were indeed stirring times, and if the Church has survived these and other blows dealt at her creeds and dogmas by the hands of friends and foes, it is because she has, with an adaptability which marks her earlier history, when she wisely adopted pagan rites and sacraments and transformed the old gods into Christian saints, silently abandoned certain beliefs as no longer "necessary to salvation." So, after all, the essayists, the bishop and the professor did not fail in their purpose of liberalizing a venerable institution whose existence, on the whole, has been more for good than for evil.

[1] Preface to *Ecce Homo*.

To take up *Essays and Reviews* nowadays is only to beget surprise that so mildly heterodox a book could have evoked anger and dismay. As for Colenso, his book recalls, not his ingenious calculations on the fecundity of Hebrew matrons and on the number of pigeons which the Hebrew priests had to eat daily, so much as the "Limericks" which his *Examination* of the earlier documents of the Bible provoked.

"A Bishop there was named Colenso,
Who counted from one up to ten so,
That the writings Levitical
He found were uncritical,
And went out to tell the black men so.

A Bishop there was of Natal,
Who had a Zulu for a pal,
Said the Zulu: 'Look here,
Ain't the Pentateuch queer?'
Which converted my Lord of Natal."

A cogent example of the change of outlook wrought within the last two generations is supplied by the late Sir Francis Galton. In his *Memoirs of My Life*[1] he says: "When I was at Cambridge the horizon of the antiquarians was so narrow that the whole history of the early world was literally believed by many of the best informed men to be contained in the Pentateuch. It was also practically supposed that nothing more of importance could be learnt of the origins of civilization during classical times than was to be found definitely stated in classical authors." In his obituary notice of Dean Milman,[2] the late Dean Stanley speaks of the horror created by the Dean's *History of the Jews*, one reason being that Abraham, "the friend of God," was

[1] p. 66.
[2] *Macmillan's Magazine*, January 1869.

described as a "sheik!" [1] In Oxford the book was denounced from the University pulpit. In a volume of Essays entitled *Authority and Archæology*, the late Canon Driver says that "there is no tittle of monumental evidence whatever that the Hebrew patriarchs lived in Palestine." He adds, "not one of the many facts adduced by Professor Sayce is independent evidence that the patriarchs visited Palestine or even that they existed at all." [2] And nobody turns a hair!

My waning belief in the Bible as in any sense a Revelation was shattered by reading Jowett's article on the "Interpretation of Scripture" in *Essays and Reviews*. "Interpret it like any other book," was the counsel. But the two books, through which, ultimately, I was to grasp the force of the ancient words: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free," were Huxley's *Man's Place in Nature*, published in 1863, and Sir E. B. Tylor's *Primitive Culture: Researches into the development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Customs*, published in 1871. Darwin's hesitation to apply his theory to man was due, he tells us, to a desire "not to add to the prejudices against his views." Huxley forced his hand. In 1860 he delivered a course of lectures to working-men, which, three years afterwards, were published under the title above-named. Their purport was to prove, as prove they did to the hilt, that no barrier exists, either in body or mind, between man and animal, and that "even the highest

[1] "The monarch [*i.e.* of Egypt] possessed a numerous seraglio which was supplied by any means, however lawless or violent. This was so notorious that Abraham, though an independent Sheik or Emir, if his fair-complexioned Mesopotamian wife should excite the cupidity of the swarthy Egyptian, might apprehend the worst consequences."—Vol. I. p. 9 (1829).

[2] p. 149.

faculties of feeling and of intellect begin to germinate in lower forms of life."

In *Primitive Culture*, as its sub-title indicates, Tylor applied the theory of evolution to every branch of knowledge. Within its limits that book remains a classic of Anthropology—the youngest and most important of all the sciences. The discoveries which are classed under that general term have acted as powerful solvents on every opinion of the past. They have proved on what mythical foundation the story of the fall of man rests, thereby demolishing the *raison d'être* of the doctrine of his redemption. They have penetrated the mists of the past and traced the legends of Paradise, Creation, the Deluge and other stories to their birthplaces in the valley of the Euphrates or the uplands of Persia. The record of man's slow, tortuous advance in material things has its parallel in his spiritual advance from naturalism, or belief in impersonal powers, through animism, or belief in spirit indwelling in everything, to the higher conception of deity.

Satisfied, by study of these, and other books bearing on the subject, as to Man being both in body and soul no exception in the processes of evolution, and as to his history being one of advance from savagery to civilization, there followed concern as to what should be taught to my children. Were they to learn a mass of fiction, with the cost and pain of unlearning it afterwards, discovering that what I had taught them or allowed them to be taught was not the truth, the truth which alone can make us " free " ?

Were they to be taught that the Almighty Maker of all things visible and invisible left his throne in heaven from time to time, and came to this earth to do things of which man, at his lowest, would be ashamed ? Were

they to be taught that all that is set down in the Bible about God actually happened? That he put the first man and woman in a garden and threatened them that if they ate of the fruit of a certain tree they would be punished with death, and not only this, but that their sin would be visited on all mankind, whose everlasting fate would be determined at the Judgment Day? Were they to be taught that this Almighty One played the part of "Peeping Tom" to see what Adam and Eve would do, knowing all the time what would happen? Were they to be taught that all the people who were afterwards born (how any could be born seems a puzzler, since no mention is made of Cain's wife) would, save eight persons, act so wickedly as to cause God to drown them? Were they to be taught that he walked and talked as man; that he was fond of the smell of roast meats; that he showed his "back parts" to the leader of a small tribe whom he made his "chosen people"; that he became their War Lord, aiding them as best he could? As best, for is it not related in the Book of Judges (ch. i. 19) that while he helped the Hebrews to conquer their mountain enemies, he could not help them to victory over their enemies in the valley because these had chariots of iron! He commanded that of his chosen people fifty thousand and seventy men should be put to death because they had been so curious and so wicked as to look into a sacred box called the ark, wherein he was believed to dwell! And so on; all through the repellent stories of meannesses and massacres, of blessings on liars and tricksters, filling writings of which I was taught to believe God himself was the author—a God thus made his own libeller! At what level of barbarism must the people have been who could thus conceive of their God!

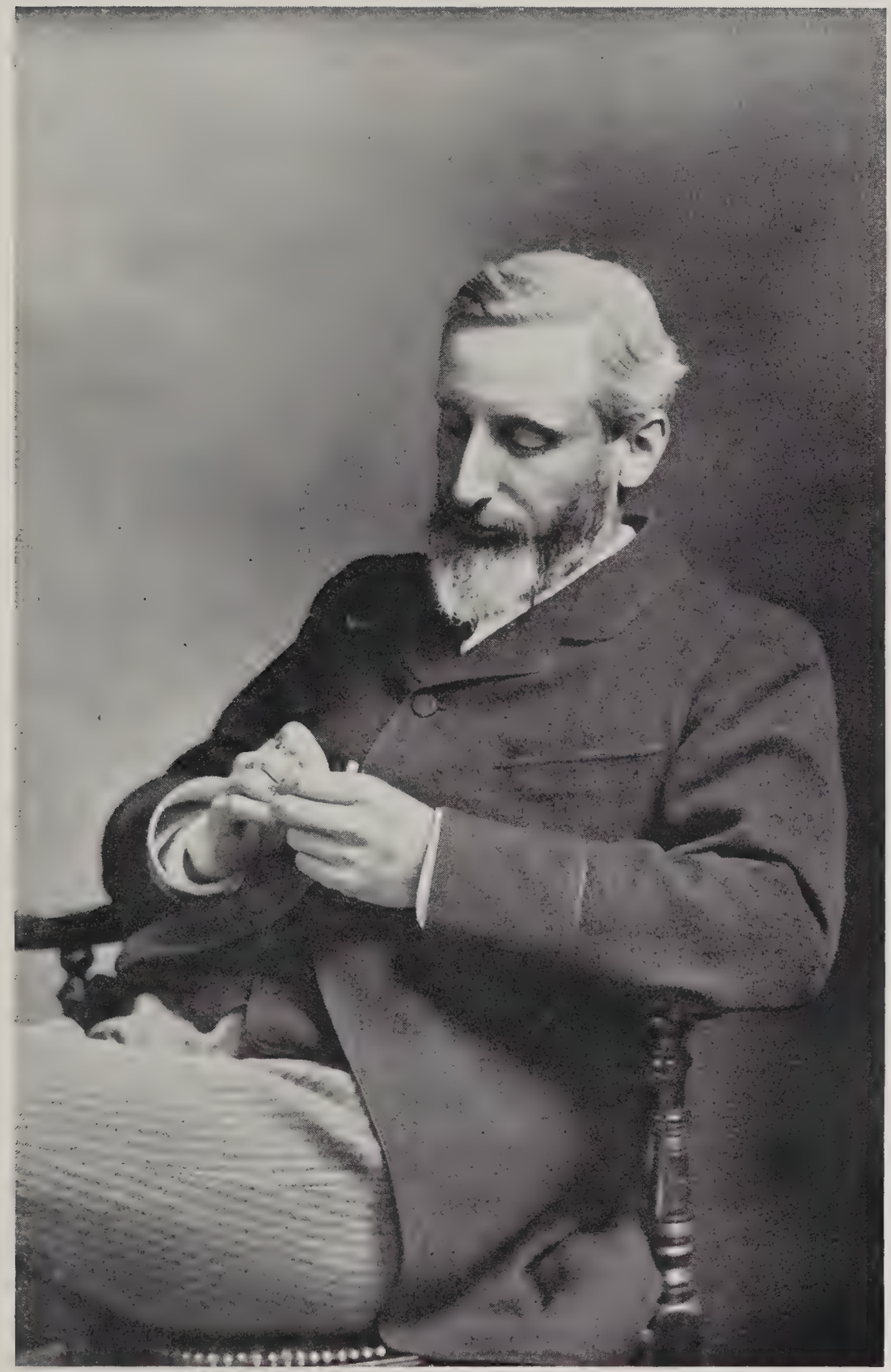
On this matter the words of a friend, the ever-lamented Professor Clifford, may be quoted. He bids us consider the "frightful loss and disappointment which is prepared for the child who, on growing up, discovers that what he has been taught is based on insufficient evidence. It is not merely that you have brought him up as a prince to find himself a pauper at eighteen. He may have allowed the teaching to get inextricably intertwined with his feelings of right and wrong. Then the overthrow of one will, at least for a time, endanger the other. You leave him the sad task of gathering together the wrecks of a life broken by disappointment and wondering whether honour itself is left to him among them." [1]

Perhaps I have said enough to explain how I came to write the *Childhood of the World* (to which what is already set down is designed to lead). I do not regret that this was done while I was still a Theist, because this secured the book a hearing which it would certainly have lacked had it been written from an Agnostic standpoint. As it was, it "caught on." It found a large public, not only here, but in America, where several pirate publishers captured it. Applications for permission to translate it into Continental languages—French, German, Italian, Dutch, Swedish and Finnish followed; then into some "heathen" tongues; and what gave me special satisfaction, a request to allow it to be embossed for the blind, "because," so the letter ran, "it had given occasion for so many intelligent questions on the part of the boys, and for the blind above all others it is necessary to have books that make them *think*. They say it is something different from what they have ever *seen* (*sic*) before."

[1] *Lectures and Essays*, Vol. II. p. 321.

All this, adding thereto many letters from unknown correspondents which the reading of the book evoked, was gratifying to an unknown author, but more than this were the friendships which it brought me and but for which these pages could not have been written.

Of the immediate personal little more need be said. The point is reached for such record as memory and fugitive notes supply concerning those with whom one can no longer take deep draughts of the " wine of life." There is temptation to tell what debts are owing to many friends, happily, still living, which can never be discharged. But to that temptation I must only rarely yield.



Photo, Elliott & Fry.] [*To face page* 20.

Yours very affectionately,

Grant Allen.

II

Grant Allen (1848–1899)

In dwelling on friendships it is interesting to trace the varied causes which beget them, causes which are often in inverse proportion to their effects. The introduction of one person to another by a third who is known to both accounts for the larger number, while a few are due to some happy chance. Of such happy chance my friendship with Grant Allen supplies an illustration. When he was Principal of a Government College in Spanish Town, Jamaica, he took a brief holiday to the Blue Mountains. There was no hotel accommodation in the little settlement where he wished to stay, so he put up at a store kept by a mulatto woman. In a small room at the back of the shop there were a few books of a kind that, in such surroundings, surprised him. These included the *Origin of Species* and my *Childhood of the World*, the title of which attracted him. After reading it he noted my address, and, when he came home in 1876, called on me, whence began a friendship which only death ended.

The College was founded for the education of coloured youths, and had as its first Principal a Mr. Chadwick. On his death, Allen, who was Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy, succeeded him, but the zeal which he brought to his work could not arrest failure. The scheme "was too ambitious and academic," he told me; "it should have been run as a Board School."

When I saw the derelict building in 1905 it was past repair; there were cases filled with insect-eaten mortar-boards and gowns, and ordure of birds and bats clogged the rickety stairs.

Allen's daily life there is whimsically told in this rhyming letter, which, as it came into my hands after the writing of my *Memoir* of him, may have place here. It is addressed to his brother-in-law, the late Franklin Richards, who died in 1905. "Gratefully remembered . . . as long as any of his friends survive" is the tribute paid him by his most intimate companion, James Sutherland Cotton.

"Here I am, my dear Franklin, in Spanish Town still, as usual, grinding away at my mill. On Logic and Ethics, on Latin and Greek I have been talking for hours till I scarcely can speak. Then I have come back from College and muddled my brain with getting up lectures on Spencer and Bain, so I think that by way of a respite I had better sit down and reply to your last welcome letter.

"But how to reply when of news I have none, there's the rub: *vide Hamlet* (Act III. and Scene 1). There's really nothing on earth I can say where as like as two peas day follows on day. For the last seven weeks it's been raining like winking, and the climate is far too oppressive for thinking. So the only device that comes under my knowledge is to tell our sad fate at the Spanish Town College.

"At seven we wake from our innocent sleep, which at least has been long if it has not been deep. Ten hours per noctem's the usual number we allot in this idlest of islands to slumber. Then our house-cleaner, Rose, brings us in a farrago of arrowroot gruel or boiled

milk and sago, which we swallow in bed—'tis the way in Jamaica—and then for another half hour we take a short nap (that's abrupt, but 'monarchs sometimes,' says Byron, 'are far less despotic than rhymes'). At eight comes my bath, the one single joy in the twenty-four hours unmixed with alloy. Oh! delight of delights, to be cool for a minute; how I gloat on the water before I get in it. How I lovingly linger and gaze from the brink ere I make up my mind in the bosom to sink. How I dive; how I revel awhile in its arms; how I tear myself sadly at last from its charms. If fair Arethusa was only as cold, I can quite understand she had lovers of old.

"By nine we have slowly completed our toilet, for hurry at anything here is to spoil it. One gives oneself plenty of time and of space, reflects for a bit after washing one's face, pulls on both one's boots with a solemn delay, and feels one's cravat an event of the day. For if collar and tie you too rapidly don, you find they are melted before they're put on. Then out to our breakfast, which needs to be good, for man has small appetite here for his food, where a lazy condition of liver is chronic and one needs to be drenched with perpetual tonic; and though there was never a house-maid like Nelly, a cook in Jamaica is no Francatelli. So we pick at the curry, we play with the bacon, and we sigh with relief when the meal has been taken.

"At ten I depart for the College to lecture on every subject of human conjecture, from the weight of the sun and the path of the planets, the earthquake that shakes and the breezes that fan it, to the freedom of will and the nature of feeling, on the relative wrongness of fibbing and stealing. For, this being but a one-manned power College, I alone must explore the whole

circle of knowledge, appraise all our poets from Chaucer to Tennyson, prove Hamilton wrong and give Bentham my benison, show how the comitia used to assemble and crib Anglo-Saxon from Palgrave and Kemble.

" Meanwhile, in the household department dear Nelly inspects the production of pudding or jelly, and, in short, overlooks the entire commissariat—no easy affair in the town that we tarry at, where we count ourselves lucky if five days a week we can get us some jam and a morsel of steak.

" By this time the sun has risen on high, and is broiling and baking the air in the sky, till its vertical rays, pouring down on us, kindle such unbearable heat that I wish Grove or Tyndall would invent us a plan for the depths of the ocean to absorb this too active molecular motion.

" But, stop, if I venture so far on detail I never shall finish in time for the mail. I will be brief—well, at one we have lunch, after which I return until three to the College to teach. Then, my work being over, we dawdle till five, or a visitor enters to keep us alive by languidly broadening the two or three topics which form our available stock in the Tropics. Next, we take a short stroll; at seven we dine and play at *bezique* or at reading till nine, when we are both very glad to retire to rest from our arduous labour and struggle our best to fall off asleep, but are met by a veto in the bloodthirsty shape of a buzzing mosquito. Not the lion who roams through the desert for food; not the pard or the tiger so lusts after blood; not the wolverine so pounces down on his quarry as that fly swoops to feast on his live, human swarry. Like the Parthian, he flies whene'er I show fight, and renews the attack when I put out the light. I pursue, and he makes for his lair in the curtain;

I retreat, and on pinions, unerringly certain, once more he returns to this cannibal strife, where he thirsts for my blood and I thirst for his life. Once more my manœuvres he deftly outflanks as I waste my assault on my innocent shanks. In the end I succumb, sinking back in my place, while the conqueror banquets at ease on my face. So at last I doze off, let him bite as he may, to repeat the whole programme *da capo* next day.

" And here this epistle at length must be ended. It's double as long as I ever intended; but, having begun, I ran on by the gallon.

" Believe me, as ever,
" Yours truly,
" Grant Allen.

" P.S.—I subscribe myself ' truly ' instead of ' sincerely,' because it agrees with the metre more nearly."

Three years of absence had put him out of touch with the literary market, and he had to learn through much tribulation that science, outside its commercial application, meant slow starvation. But it was a means to an end. He wrote a book entitled *Physiological Æsthetics*, the publication of which left him £50 to the bad. But it brought him into friendly relations with Herbert Spencer, Alfred Russel Wallace, and other men of eminence, and, moreover, secured him a hearing from editors who cared for things of the mind—among these Sir Leslie Stephen. Thus was obtained a market for a series of popular essays on science, in the writing of which he had few equals and has had no superior. But, as happens in other markets, the supply exceeded the demand, and he was driven to utilize experiences gained in the tropics by writing short stories which had unique situations for their *motif*. The earliest of these,

entitled the *Rev. John Creedy*, was the forerunner of a goodly number which, that his reputation as a scientific writer might not be prejudiced, appeared as by "J. Arbuthnot Wilson"—a cryptic for JAW. Meeting Richard Proctor at my house one evening, when talk fell on story-telling, he let slip some fact which made Proctor, who also used a *nom de plume*—"Thomas Foster"—for his lighter papers, suddenly exclaim, "You wrote *John Creedy*," and so the murder was out. Nevertheless, Allen, for further concealment, published his first three-volume novel, *Philistia*, under the pseudonym of "Cecil Power." It had only indifferent success. It dealt mainly with Socialism—conversations about which the ordinary novel-reader resents. So in the novels that followed he had, as he wrote to me, to learn "to do the sensational things that please the editors." In one of these, entitled *The Great Ruby Robbery*, he unwittingly catered for an invalid. He makes one of the characters say humorously that Browning is "splendid for the nerves," whereupon he received the following naïve letter—

"Dear Sir,

"Pardon the liberty I am taking. In your clever story of *The Great Ruby Robbery* you mention Browning being splendid for the nerves. Is there such a thing, would you give me the address to obtain. I am a dreadful sufferer of nervousness. Under such circumstances will you accept my apology for troubling."

Two years after *Philistia* he published *Kalee's Shrine*. The earlier chapters of that story were written at my house, and under the name of Thorborough-on-Sea (suggested by the adjoining hamlet of Thorpe) he

described Aldeburgh as a place "in which nothing commands one's love. And yet everybody who has once been there, still would go; he knows not why, he asks not wherefore. The whole borough, like the chameleon of natural history, lives on air, for the air of Thorborough is most undeniable. It exhilarates the heart of man (and woman) like the best Sillery."

At first the novel hung fire, but in the end its success as a "seller" was assured. Andrew Lang wrote thus about it—

"1, Marloes Road, W.
[*Undated.*]

"DEAR CLODD,

"I'm sorry for *Kalee*, but I've shot my bolt and written two puffs. *The Times* might be of service, but I know not that Joseph, nor he me. I hope Allen will soon come to Roast Beef, which, for one, I hate.

"Thanks for the nice things you say of Letters to Goners.[1] I wish I could sell 4000 of *them*.

"Yours very truly,
"A. LANG."

Best of good company, Allen was the quintessence of amiability, but sometimes the worm would turn. Meeting a common friend, the late Canon Isaac Taylor, author of *Words and Places* and other books, at my house, the Canon, who had a certain acidity of note at times, remarked to Allen that in writing his novels he must now and again have some difficulty in disposing of his rascals. "Not at all," retorted Allen. "I make them into Canons!" Later in the evening he said to me, "I should like to further score off the Canon by reading Kipling's *Tomlinson*." Listening to it did not

[1] *Letters to Dead Authors.*

put the Canon at his ease, but he took the chastening kindly. He, in turn, loved his joke. Visiting him at Settrington Rectory one Easter, on the Sunday morning he said to me, "I know that you do not go to Church, but you must come this morning. My curate will preach, and he is sometimes amusing. A few weeks back he began a sermon on the text, 'Redeeming the time,' by saying: 'My dear friends, procrastination is often the cause of much delay.'" After family prayers that morning he told me an amusing story anent that function. At a brother clergyman's, a new housemaid, after attending it, flounced out of the room in a manner showing violent temper. The mistress hastened after her to ask what it meant. The girl replied, "I ain't a-going to stop in this 'ouse; I've never been so hinsulted in all my life by hanybody." "Whatever do you mean?" asked the mistress. "Well, ma'am, master said, 'O God, who hatest nothing but the 'ousemaid." The girl had more reason on her side than the butler who, as the story goes, refused to attend family prayers because he was on board wages!

The "tightness of the chest" from which Allen suffered gave, on another occasion, drollery to his talk. Our Whitsun party included three philologists: Canon Taylor, Professor (the Rt. Hon. Sir John, as he afterwards became) Rhŷs, and the Rev. Richard Morris—all of cherished memories. One day the talk fell on the number of words used in their common avocations by country working folk. Max Müller was cited as authority for the statement that some rustics have not more than three hundred words in their vocabulary. Allen challenged this, and, as was ever his wont when talking, twisting his platyscopic lens between finger and thumb, began recounting all the things, and the parts

of things, with which an agricultural labourer has to deal daily. Ere the list was half through Allen had well-nigh reached the stated limit when he suddenly called out, "Look here, you fellows, my price is two guineas a thousand words, and I'm not going on any longer."

Like Huxley, the study of the evolution of religion interested Allen deeply. He attached no light importance to a book published two years before his death, in which, under the title of *The Evolution of the Idea of God*, following Herbert Spencer, he sought to show that the one ultimate source of the God-idea is in ancestor-worship, the dead man being believed-in as a still surviving ghost or spirit, endowed with supernatural powers. In the copy which he gave me he inscribed it to me as one "whose encouragement had largely produced it," and this despite a fundamental difference on the subject between us. This is not the place to enlarge on the matter, but it is the place to insert a characteristic letter about that book from Andrew Lang, who, in his obituary notice of Allen, spoke of himself as "one born to differ from Allen on almost every conceivable point." He adds: "I never could irritate him by opposition, and this I am anxious to record as a proof of the wonderful sweetness of his nature."

"1, Marloes Road, W.,
"*June* 6, 1900.

"DEAR CLODD,

"*Drôle d'un* cove, poor Allen. Why, being scientific, did he not get up his facts in his book on deity? And a Martyr and Rebel ought not to make these unparalleled concessions that he made. I like him very much, and I daresay the celebrated 'Celtic' element would explain many things if I believed in a 'Celtic'

element. I don't think he ever seriously studied anything . . . not that he was aware of the circumstance.

"But his heart was in the right place: he was a gentleman and, *sans le savoir*, a Christian.

"Yours very truly,

"A. Lang."

When any *outré* heterodox opinion was broached, Allen, with a droll twinkle, would remind us that he was the son of a clergyman. That was why, he said, whenever liqueurs were offered him, he chose Benedictine, because it had the pious initials D.O.M. on the bottle! Had he lived till 1906, the eventful year in which "Quaker Didson's Cordial" became known to me, he might have preferred that, because each bottle bears in raised letters the monition, "Shud at the presence of God's Word."

He who wrote the stirring lines—

> "If systems that be are the order of God,
> Revolt is a part of the order,"

was no defender of any faith. But the fact that he was a whole-hearted evolutionist, who, in consonance with his creed, would admit no break in the chain of continuity, explains why, in a talk with Prince Kropotkin at my house, he condemned the misuse and destruction of beautiful and historical buildings by the French Communists, the Prince defending their acts because of the shameful associations linked with cathedral, palace and hall of justice—*Ecrasez l'infâme*.

"Viola, Bromley, Kent,

"*December* 21, 1899.

"Dear Mr. Clodd,

"I do not well remember our conversation with Grant Allen, although I very well remember the most

pleasant hours we spent in your house in your company.

" Alas ! demolition alone would not help and could only increase the ' poetical regret.' So long as *scientific methods of thinking* remain a closed letter, not only with the millions and millions, but even with the immense majority of men imagining themselves to be scientific (historians, economists, students of law, etc., etc.), so long as the inculcation of these methods in school will be kept in horror, and the *un*scientific methods of thinking will be inculcated by all possible means. See three-quarters of the education of this country in the hands of men who have no suspicion of there being such a thing as *scientific* (inductive and deductive) thinking, and so long as science herself will do everything in her power to preach most absurd and unethical conclusions, such as *woe to the weak*, then all will remain as it is. Belief in mysterious agencies, and the unreasonable need of man for ethical-poetical conceptions, will rebuild cathedrals and worship in one way or the other.

" The would-be science of the privileged ones has and can have no hold upon the very springs of superstition and want of poetical understanding of Nature.

" I should be delighted to meet once more and this—soon. But the time given to my *Memoirs* has resulted in so many arrears that I really don't see my way to clear that forest soon.

" With best good wishes and greetings,

" Yours very sincerely,

" P. Kropotkin."

That Allen could handle the lyre deftly, both in light and serious touch, is evidenced in his slender volume of

poems, *The Lower Slopes*. What thought-compelling themes he could set to stately music is shown in the poem *In Magdalen Tower*, which holds haunting verses like this—

> "The city lies below me wrapped in slumber;
> Mute and unmoved in all her streets she lies:
> Mid rapid thoughts that throng me without number
> Flashes the image of an old surmise.
> Her hopes and griefs and fears are all suspended;
> Ten thousand souls throughout her precincts take
> Sleep, in whose bosom life and death are blended,
> And I alone awake."

Those who, among "the high Midsummer pomps" of the Thames Valley—to wit, at Great Marlow—were at the dinner of the Omar Khayyám Club in July 1896, will not readily forget, as they drank their red wine and toasted their guests, what fillip was given to the occasion by the poem which Allen contributed. My friend, Clement Shorter, who was President of the Club that year, printed it in the *Sketch*, of which he was then editor. But newspapers are of "the things which to-day are and to-morrow are cast into the oven," and as the poem is now accessible only to possessors of the privately-printed *Book of the Omar Khayyám Club*, it is given here.

Omar at Marlow

> "Too long have we dallied, my Omar, too long
> With metres austere and iambic:
> A rapider measure I ask for my song,
> Anapæstic, abrupt, dithyrambic.
> The reddest of roses my locks shall entwine,
> And—ho there! Luigi or Carlo!
> A beaker this way of the ruddiest wine
> That lurks in the cellars of Marlow!
>
> Is it chance, is it fate, that has guided our crew
> To a nook by the eddying river,
> Where Shelley gazed down upon ripples that woo,
> And rushes that listen and quiver?

He loved not to look on the wine as it flows
Blood-red from the flagon that holds it;
Yet who could so pierce to the soul of a rose
Through the chalice of bloom that enfolds it?

Not as he, not as he, was the Seer of the East,
The Master and Mage that we follow;
He knew, as he smiled on the amorous feast,
That the world—and the wine-cup—are hollow;
But he knew that the Power, high-sceptred above,
Is more than the anchorite spectre;
That the world may be filled with the greatness of love,
And the wine-cup with roseate nectar.

No saint—and no sot—was Omar, I wis,
But a singer serene, philosophic;
For Philosophy mellows her mouth to a kiss
With each step she takes towards the tropic.
Pale gold is the grain in the vats of the north;
Lush purple thy grape, Algeciras;
And the creed that is cold by the mists of the Forth,
Glows pink in the gardens of Shiraz.

Of fate and foreknowledge, of freedom and doom,
He sang; of the bud and the blossom.
Life, whirled in a flash from its birth to its tomb;
Death, gathering all in his bosom;
Of Allah, who, cloaked by the World and the Word,
Still veils his inscrutable features;
Of man, and his debt to his Maker and Lord;
Of God, and his debt to his creatures.

A rebel our Shelley! a rebel our Mage!
That brotherly link shall suffice us;
'Tis in vain that the zealots, O Prophet and Sage,
From his creed—and from thine—would entice us;
We seek not to stray from the path that ye trod,
We seek but to widen its border;
If systems that be are the order of God,
Revolt is a part of the order.

But whither, oh, whither, my petulant Muse,
To heights that outsoar and surpass us?
Not thine to be sprent with ineffable dews
On perilous peaks of Parnassus.
Leave loftier themes of the fortunes of man
To our orient's occident herald,
Who grafted a rose of thy stock, Gulistán,
Upon English sweetbriar—FitzGerald!

These three be the tutelar gods of our feast,
And, to-night, 'twere a sin to divide them;
Two bards of the West and a bard of the East,
With one spirit to quicken and guide them.
So Luigi or Carlo, a beaker again,
This way, of your liveliest Pommard!
We'll drink to a trio whose star shall not wane—
Here's Shelley, FitzGerald, and Omar."[12]

Until within a year or two of his death Allen made one at my yearly Whitsuntide gatherings at Aldeburgh. How "we tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky." Every occasion was a *convivium*, "a living together." "It is," says Cicero in his delightful essay *On Old Age*, "a better term than the Greek *symposium*, which means a drinking or an eating together." Some of the occasions were marked by the reading of a poem composed by one of the party. Of the two which Allen wrote, one was published under the title of *Whitsun at Aldeburgh* in my *Memoir* of him. The other, which is not in that volume, is given here. Added to this are poems, one, published without his permission, which I take for granted, by my friend, H. W. Massingham, the other by that prince of raconteurs, the late Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson.

Aldeburgh,
Whitsunday, 1894.

"Oh, how we laughed until we cried
In Strafford House, at Whitsuntide!
What words we spake of men and gods,
Beneath that friendly roof of Clodd's—
A party that was none the limper
For holding in it Edward Whymper.
How grim we smiled at Alpine grips
Shot bolt-wise from those caustic lips:
How late we tarried, slow and tardy,
Yet loth to lose one tale from Hardy!
So lightly fled the hurrying hours,
Their wings just dashed with summer showers:

Wild winds might blow from every quarter;
Still beamed the genial face of Shorter:
Big drops might patter by the gallon;
Still faster flowed the tongue of Allen:
The clock might point a warning hand;
What recked of clocks that jovial band,
While Alps with virgin snow were hoary,
Or Wessex moors lay steeped in glory,
While wistful wreaths of smoke upcurled
To veil an all too solid world,
And limpid still, on souls untroubled
The crystal fount of whiskey bubbled.
  Ah, years that come, ah, years that go,
You bring us weal, or bring us woe,
But not one hour—I'll lay you odds—
To match that Whitsun week at Clodd's."

GRANT ALLEN.

Whitsun, 1895.

HADRIAN'S SONG

What is my heart's desire?

I

"What is my heart's desire?
  To know! to know!
Whence comes the living fire
That in my heart doth glow,
  And whither it must go!

II

What is my heart's desire?
  To lay up gold;
Such treasures to acquire
And such possessions hold;
  As cannot all be told.

III

What is my heart's desire?
  To sit on high
And like a god aspire
To conquer destiny
  As one who cannot die.

IV

What is my heart's desire?
A woman's love
Sweet as a well-tuned lyre;
Fixed as that star above
Round which all others move.

V

What is my heart's desire
Above all these?
A friend who will not tire
Of friendship's subtleties,
Though all my faults he sees."

B. W. R.

[Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson.]

Aldeburgh,
Whitsuntide, 1897.

"Sunlit and laughter-lit our days have sped,
And now, dear Clodd, you crave a farewell ditty,
Before we rattle back, with eyes averse,
To that infernal city.

But long the muse has fled, and left my heart
Bare as these sands, a dry and dusty particle—
My pen a spoon for stirring light confections
Of frothy leading article.

Compact of hero,[1] scholar,[2] artist,[3] editor,[4]
This learnéd, but not grimly austere, party
Has stripped the 'duds' off he and she divinities
From Siva to Astarte.

And now dismayed, it seeks a guardian saint
To stay the wrath of each offended god,
And calls on thee, kind host, best son of Earth,
Warm-hearted Clodd."

H. W. Massingham.

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[1] Sir George Scott Robertson.
[2] Grant Allen.
[3] William Simpson.
[4] Clement Shorter.

III

William Kingdon Clifford (1845–1879). Thomas Henry Huxley (1825–1895). Sir Henry Thompson (1820–1904)

I first met Huxley at Professor Clifford's. The Sunday afternoons at Colville Road are linked with fragrant and refreshing memories. You were sure to meet some one worth the knowing. There was no smart set to fill their empty time and waste yours in inane gossip; no prigs to irritate you with their affectation, and no pedants to bore you with their academic vagueness, but just a company of sane and healthy men and women, gentle and simple, who wanted to meet one another and have a full, free talk which was "gay without frivolity."

Old friends—Sir Frederick Pollock, the Huxleys and Colliers, Sir Leslie Stephen and G. J. Romanes—were often there. More rarely, Cotter Morison, York Powell, Mark Pattison, Grant and Nellie Allen, Thomas Hardy, and Mrs. Lynn Linton dropped in; with these and others there was never a barren time. Vanished are many of them, but the remnant, with some newcomers, forgather in another house where Clifford's gifted and genial wife maintains the old tradition. For herself, she has made her "calling and election sure" among those who maintain the high standard of English fiction, unsoiled by the erotic, neurotic and Tommyrotic.

A break may here be permitted for reference to

Romanes, if only to record a well-remembered story. I preface this to say that he was of Canadian birth and Scotch descent, with probably a dash of gipsy blood in him. A happy tide in the family fortunes enabled him to follow his own bent, and he had the advantage of studying physiology under the late Sir Michael Foster at Cambridge University. But throughout his career he was theologian as much as he was biologist, and our talks at the Savile Club ran more often on religion than on science. While at Cambridge he won the Burney Prize on *Christian Prayer and General Laws*, and it was no long-kept secret that, under the pseudonym of Physicus, he was the author of *A Candid Examination of Theism*. But he made contributions of value to animal psychology and to the theory of organic evolution generally, which were arrested by physical and mental breakdown, resulting in his death at the age of forty-six. Much was made of his reputed acceptance of the Christian creed by his orthodox widow, who was also his biographer, but here, as in other instances, the facts proved that he had reached a stage of brain decay which made any confessions, whether of belief or disbelief, worthless.

The story is as follows: One evening at Clifford's, Romanes, who was pursuing researches into the existence of a nervous system in medusæ and other lower organisms, talked about the tests that he was applying. He put a big jelly-fish into a glass jar of salt water, and then poured in some whiskey. Nothing happened; then he added more; whereupon the hitherto rhythmic movements of the creature became irregular. Then more and still more whiskey, until the jelly-fish subsided to the bottom of the jar in a state of helpless drunkenness. "Well," said Clifford, "I hope you gave it a

brandy-and-soda next morning." It was by careful and repeated experiments that Romanes discovered the rudiments of nerves in animals which, till then, had not been shown to possess organs linking them with the highest life forms.

It was not till after his marriage in 1875 that I knew Clifford, and as the preliminary trouble which proved fatal to him in 1879 was manifest soon after, he was compelled from time to time to seek abroad the recovery that never came. Hence, the chances of seeing much of him were few. His career was marvellous in what it covered. Second Wrangler; Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, when he was twenty-three; Professor of Applied Mathematics in University College at twenty-six, and a Fellow of the Royal Society at twenty-nine; it seemed that the world lay at the feet of the brilliant young mathematician who was so much else beside. When he was at Cambridge he was an ardent High Churchman, but from that creed he speedily broke away to become the enthusiastic propounder and defender of the faith as it is in Darwin. *Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit*—whether it was in lecturing on ethics or atoms, while his joyous nature revelled in writing fairy tales and songs for children, to whom he was devoted.

Those whom these words may move to know more about Clifford, should read the biography which Sir Frederick Pollock contributed to the posthumous *Lectures and Essays*. This extract may suffice to send them to the book—

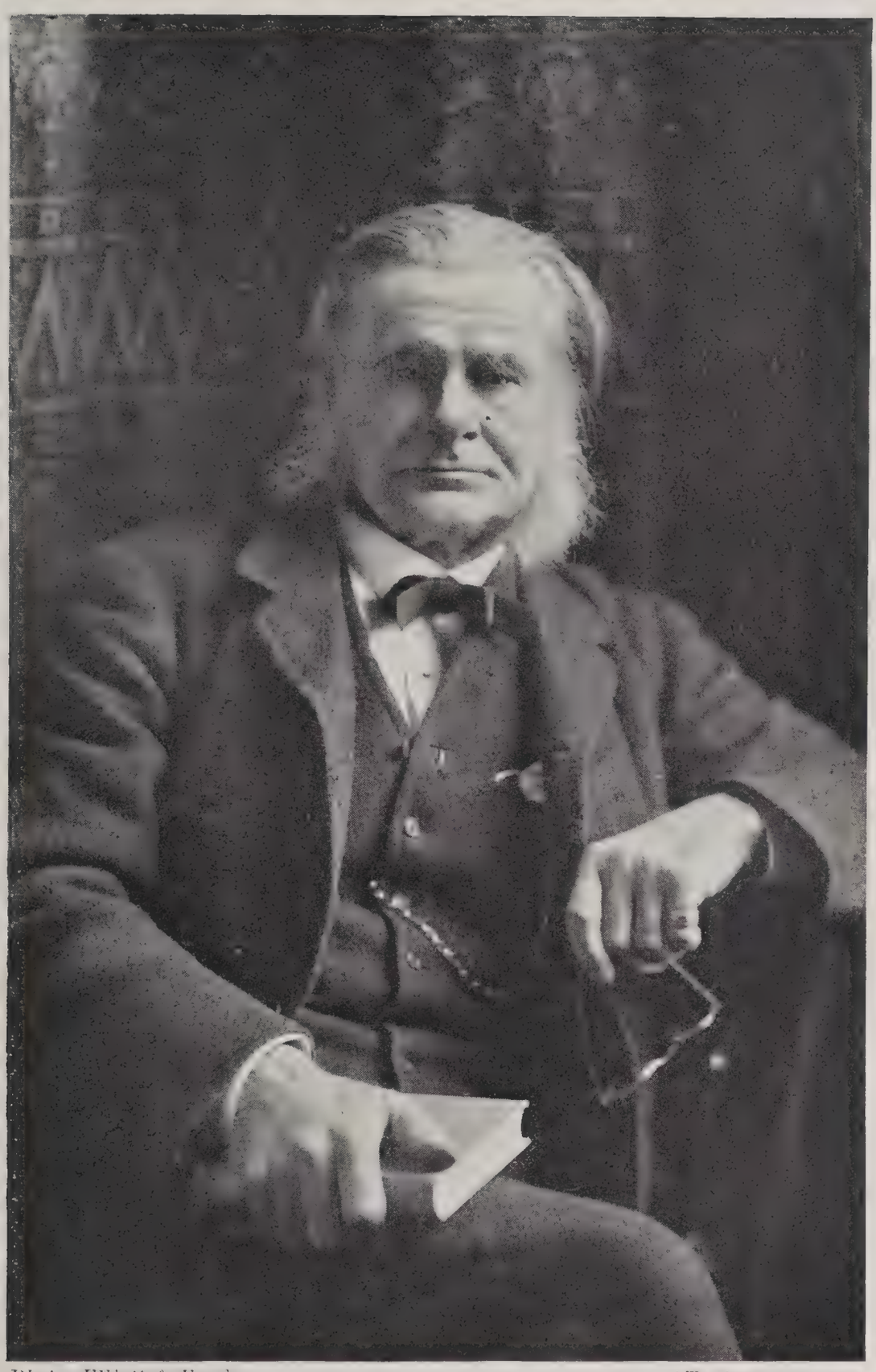
" Clifford's patience, cheerfulness, unselfishness, and continued interest in his friends and in what was going on in the world, were unbroken and unabated through all that heavy time. Far be it from me, as it was from

him, to grudge to any man or woman the hope or comfort of sincere expectation of a better life to come. But let this be set down and remembered, plainly and openly, for the instruction and rebuke of those who fancy that their dogmas have a monopoly of happiness, and will not face the fact that there are true men, aye, and women, to whom the dignity of manhood and the fellowship of life, undazzled by the magic of any revelation, unbroken by any promises holding out aught as higher or more enduring than the fruition of human love and the fulfilment of human duties, are sufficient to bear the weight of both life and death. Here was a man who utterly dismissed from his thoughts, as being unprofitable or worse, all speculations on a future or unseen world; a man to whom life was holy and precious, a thing not to be despised, but to be used with joyfulness; a soul full of life and light, ever longing for activity, ever counting what was achieved as not worthy to be reckoned in comparison with what was left to do. And this is the witness of his ending; that as never man loved life more, so never man feared death less. He fulfilled well and truly that great saying of Spinoza, often in his mind and on his lips: *Homo liber de nulla re minus quam de morte cogitat.*" [1]

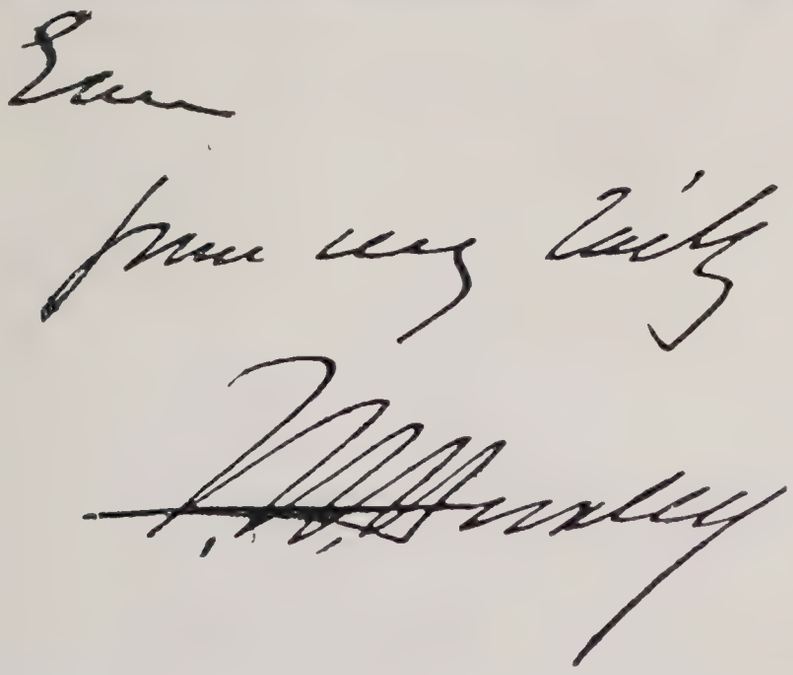
Thomas Henry Huxley (1825–1895).

It was worth being born to have known Huxley. In the words of Ben Jonson: "I loved the man and do honour to his memory on this side idolatry as much as any." To the intellectual nutriment and stimulus with which he enriched all who enjoyed his friendship

[1] "The free man thinks of nothing less than of death."—*Ethics*, prop. lxvii.



Photo, Elliott & Fry.] [*To face page* 40.



there was added the attraction of a delightful personality. Such, to all who knew him, was "that uncouth pedagogue of science," as the *Hon.* Stephen Coleridge, to his *dis*honour, calls him in his *Memoirs*.[1] On the strength of what was then a slender acquaintance, I ventured to send him my *Jesus of Nazareth*, and I rarely have had a happier hour than that in which I received his acknowledgment in the following letter—

"4, Marlborough Place, N.W.,
December 21, 1879.

"My dear Mr. Clodd,

"I have been spending all this Sunday afternoon over the book you have been kind enough to send me, and, being a swift reader, I have travelled honestly from cover to cover.

"It is the book I have been longing to see; in spirit, matter and form it appears to me to be exactly what people like myself have long been wanting. For, though for the last quarter of a century I have done all that lay in my power to oppose and destroy the idolatrous accretions of Judaism and Christianity, I have never had the slightest sympathy with those who, as the Germans say, would throw the child away along with the bath—and when I was a member of the London School Board I fought for the retention of the Bible to the great scandal of some of my liberal friends who cannot make out to this day whether I was a hypocrite or simply a fool on that occasion.[2]

"But my meaning was that the mass of the people should not be deprived of the one great literature which is open to them—not shut out from the perception of their relation with the whole past history of civilized mankind—not excluded from such a view of Judaism

[1] p. 230. [2] p. 231 (*infra*).

and Jesus of Nazareth as that which at last you have given us. I cannot doubt that your work will have a great success not only in the grosser, but the better sense of the word.

" We have a way of making Sunday evenings pleasant by seeing friends who come in without ceremony to a ' tall tea ' at half-past six. It would give my wife and myself great pleasure if at any time you would join us.

" Yours sincerely,

" T. H. Huxley."

Needless to say, my first free Sunday found me at Marlborough Place. To have the *entrée* to those " tall teas " was to be admitted to a company wherein affectations and social insincerities had no place, and within a domestic circle of which the guest was made to feel himself a member. Playfulness and tenderness marked the home life of Huxley; such asperity as was in him was a necessary reserve fund to expend on fools and bores outside his doors whom he could not "suffer gladly."

As an example of the harmless fun which enlivened the gatherings, I remember one evening, when his gifted and beautiful daughter Marian, an artist full of promise, whose death cast an abiding shadow on the life of parents and of husband, said something pert and pointed—the words have slipped my memory—he put his hand on her shoulder and smiling, said to me, " You see that this household is a republic tempered by epigram." On my commenting on his house being next to a church, he said, " Yes, I need not quote the adage to you."

Full of " go " as was the table-talk, there was an added joy when we were *tête-à-tête* in his " smoking den." Tobacco alight, the host smoking a briar-wood pipe,

the great company of books suggested themes to set tongues going. Huxley's omnivorous reading and retentive memory evidenced on what intimate terms he lived with both past and present in the great writers. He loved poetry, and, as shown in some felicitous verses added to a privately-printed volume of Mrs. Huxley's poems (published in 1913, a few months before her death), dabbled in it himself. One of his favourite volumes was Meredith's *Modern Love*, and I well remember his reading of *Juggling Jerry* and *The Old Chartist*. This reminds me that one evening, when Meredith was staying with me at Aldeburgh, there dropped-in a prominent politician to whose ancestors, Radicals in those days, Meredith made reference. Then he rolled out a stanza of his *Old Chartist*, whereupon the book was fetched and, after a deprecating shake of the head, he read the whole poem.

One densely foggy Sunday evening, when only Mrs. Clifford and I turned up, Huxley took me into his den for a talk. Browsing about an odd corner, I noticed a queer collection of more or less obsolete books on philosophy and theology, and expressed my wonder at finding that he kept such company. "Oh," he said, "they are in what I call the 'Condemned cell.'" He added that he had read that kind of stuff so that he might know what men of obscurantist type had to say for themselves. "You can," he said, "only successfully oppose clericalism by being able to measure the force of the stock arguments on which it rests. It has been, and always will be, the foe of progress. There has never been a movement towards reform of abuses and injustices which has not been opposed by the parsons. Why, never a voice was lifted by your gentlemen in lawn sleeves in the House of Lords against

abolishing hanging for petty thefts, or for the removal of any of the disabilities on Jews, Roman Catholics and Dissenters. The Dissenters were excluded from the Universities, and when they died, could not be buried with their own simple rites in the parish churchyard. And it was not through the help of the Bishops and parsons that Forster carried his Education Bill in 1870."

He spoke of Hobbes' *Leviathan* as the book which, in the degree that his style had been influenced at all by reading, had been formative upon him. The crispness, clearness and virility of that treatise attracted a mind to which verbosity and haziness were repellent. Hence his impatience with any controversialist whose arguments were of the cuttle-fish type. In a letter to Colonel Ingersoll, which was published after Mr. Leonard Huxley's excellent *Life and Letters* of his father appeared, there occurs this sentence : " Gladstone's attack on you is one of the best things he has written. I do not think that there is more than 50 per cent. more verbiage than necessary, nor any sentence with more than two meanings." He would have enjoyed the dialogue in Mr. F. Manning's *Scenes and Portraits*, wherein Leo XIII is made to say : " The impregnable Rock on which we build is the impregnable ignorance of the majority."

There is need in these days of anæmic beliefs and weak convictions for a man of Huxley's virile type. He has left no successor. I remember being present at a dinner of the Royal Society at which Mr. Shaw Lefevre, in proposing Huxley's health, expressed regret that so skilful a dialectic had never sat in Parliament. Huxley, with an emphasis not to be forgotten, replied that all his life he had been consumed by a passion for the discovery of truth and not for its obscuration. Hence he never had any ambition to enter on a political career.

Of the lectures which I heard him deliver none stands out so clearly as that *On the Coming of Age of the Origin of Species*. It was at the Royal Institution on April 9, 1880. Reviewing the fortunes of that book from the time when the usual epithets of which theology has a monopoly were hurled at it to its ultimate acceptance, Huxley closed his lecture in these words : " Like Harvey, Mr. Darwin has lived long enough to outlast detraction and opposition and to see the stone which the builders rejected become the head-stone of the corner." Among the audience that filled the theatre was Ernest Renan, sleek, smooth-shaven like a well-groomed ecclesiastic, whom it was my privilege to meet at Sir Frederick Pollock's on the 14th following. We exchanged a few words; he in bad English, I in worse French.

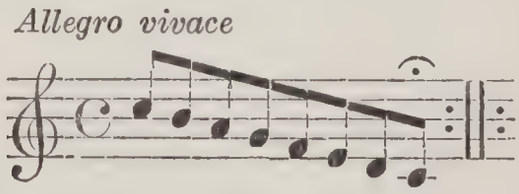
To his lasting discredit the then editor of *Punch*, a Roman Catholic, admitted a cartoon of Huxley with the letters £. S. D. affixed to his name, implying that pursuit of money and not of truth, had marked his career. Throughout his life, he had to struggle with moderate means and, through ill health, to retire a relatively poor man at the early age of sixty on a moderate pension. Like Faraday, he had " no time to make money." To him may be applied this stately verse from Matthew Arnold's poem on Dean Stanley—

" And truly he who here
Hath run his bright career,
And served men nobly and acceptance found,
And borne to right and light his witness high;
What could he better wish than then to die,
And wait the issue sleeping underground.
Why should he pray to range
Down the long age of truth that ripens slow,
And break his heart with all the baffling change,
And all the tedious tossing to and fro."

In 1907 Mr. Leonard Huxley had to write to the *Daily Mail* to protest against its circulation of a slander that Huxley had " before his death virtually abandoned the extreme views which he had taken up in sincere good faith and owned that his conception of a world without God was an illogical one." Mr. Leonard Huxley's refutation was easy and complete. He gave the lie direct to the statement. His father " remained consistently in the attitude which he defined as Agnosticism. When the *Daily Mail* solemnly enunciates a misconception of this kind barely a dozen years after a man's death and while his writings are open for all the world to read, one ceases to be astonished at the wondrous growth of legend elsewhere."

Much more could I say, but this would be only to repeat my attempt at a portrait of Huxley in his many-sidedness in a little book which was published in 1902.

Sir Henry Thompson (1820–1904).

Sir Henry Thompson was a native of Framlingham. His parents and my near relatives were neighbours and friends. As he was twenty years my senior and, when I was eight years old, was a student at University College Hospital, I came to know him only late in his life when I was, at intervals, a guest at his " Octaves." They were unique. They were so-called because the company and the courses alike numbered eight and the dinner was at that hour. Each menu had this heading—

The guests were regarded as eight musical notes forming

the scale of C major, and the host as the staff which retains them. C means common time; the sign on the last note meant, "Don't be in a hurry to go," and the sign before the double bar was to indicate the hope that the visit would be repeated. The host, Spartan in his diet and an abstainer, placed before his guests the choicest viands and wines, but, better than these, was the skill with which he brought together men whose talk and tastes were complementary to one another.

Sir Henry Thompson had a remarkable career. The fame and fortune of the young surgeon was secured when, as he said to me, it was "a case of curing or killing a king." The success of his operation—his wonderful delicacy of touch was a main factor—of lithotrity on Leopold I, King of the Belgians, brought him into prominence; with large practice came fortune (one grateful patient left him £70,000), enabling him to gratify his versatile tastes. He was devoted to art; he was a frequent contributor to the Royal Academy; among his portraits is a pencil head of Thackeray, a copy of which hangs on my study walls, inscribed, "To Edward Clodd from his friend Henry Thompson, the author of the sketch." He was fond of music; Miss Kate Loder, a celebrated pianist, became his wife. He was the author of more than one novel, *Charley Kingston's Aunt* being the best known of the series; he wrote on dietetics, and, caring for the dead as well as the living, plied his pen in favour of cremation, being practically the founder of the Cremation Society. Reference to this recalls the sexton's remonstrative appeal in *Punch*—

> "Can we earn our living
> If you urn our dead?"

Astronomy was more than a hobby with him, and when he gave up his observatory at Molesey, he enriched the Greenwich Observatory with a couple of noble telescopes and needful apparatus.

His parents were strict Baptists; so strict that, at first, his father opposed his becoming a doctor on the ground that all doctors are, or become, infidels. He justified the sad prediction, and as the subjoined letter shows, became an Agnostic, although not with the sure-footedness of Huxley.

In full measure can it be said of him that " age could not wither, nor custom stale his infinite variety."

" 35, Wimpole Street, W.,
" *March* 5, 1902.

" My dear Clodd,

" I am delighted to have your approval, up to a certain point—of my essay in the *Fortnightly*,[1] and thank you for the attention and care you have given to the subject.

" Let me say that I am agnostic to the backbone, *i. e.* I believe only that—as I have said in my short survey—for which I have satisfactory grounds for so doing. I believe, with Huxley, that it is not only absolutely necessary to have sufficient evidence for one's faith, but that it is sinful to believe anything without it. Now, in my opinion, I infer nothing in that article for which I do not adduce sufficient evidence. I regard the beneficence of the Infinite and Eternal Energy to be proved beyond dispute. The existence of wars and misery has no difficulty for me. Man is in his infancy—is still going through the process of education and evolution, shown in the former portion of the essay, as long, slow and

[1] *Fortnightly Review*, Vol. LXXVII. March 1902.

painful, yet the only possible training to make him what he is—and I look for a more highly developed being as the result of the continuance of the process, during the next few centuries—let me say in my usual scripture quoting habit—but 'a little lower than the angels' (whatever they may be).

"I have just looked to the *Romanes Lecture* where it appeared to me at the time, Huxley gave the real agnostic position.

" Time doesn't permit me to add more in writing, one could only discuss the point, if the opportunity offered.

" Very sincerely yours,

" Henry Thompson."

IV

Herbert Spencer (1820–1903)

It was at Grant Allen's that, in 1889, I first met Herbert Spencer. Despite all dodges on Allen's part to frustrate the scheme, Spencer insisted on going as a paying guest to the Nook, Dorking. With a candour which informs all his writings, Spencer tells us in his *Autobiography* that no good resulted from the stay. The reason he gives is that there " was a little too much physical effort followed by a little too much mental excitement." [1] The philosopher was hard to please, as much in the satisfaction of real needs as of imaginary wants. The eccentric nature of his demands is revealed with unconscious naïveté in the gossipy booklet entitled *Home Life with Herbert Spencer by Two*, written by the ladies who kept his house. They say in the preface that it had its origin " in the deep sense of duty we feel we owe to Mr. Spencer." It is doubtful if he would have been satisfied with the way in which they have discharged the debt. Additions to examples of his irritating foibles and pettiness are superfluous, but a couple will bear the telling. I had the advantage of seeing in full working the ear-stoppers whose mechanism is described by the *Two*. Probably some frivolous remark of mine secured me this privilege. For in the middle of the meal, Spencer, with fixed glance on me, pressed the spring which closed the hole of each ear. After

[1] Vol. II. p. 412.

lunch my host and I sat chatting in the garden, when there came an invitation from Spencer to us to take a drive with him in his rubber-tyred carriage, the message adding, "that we were not to talk." What answer, I hope, courteously worded, was sent back, may be guessed.

I met him occasionally at the Savile, which Club he joined because he could play billiards there on Sundays, a privilege denied at the Athenæum—"fogey-dom"—as Huxley called it. *Apropos* of Spencer's play, Cotter Morison told me that Captain Sterling, son of John Sterling, had a game with Spencer at the Athenæum and beat him badly. Whereupon the inevitable philosophic comment followed: "Skill in billiards is often a proof of an ill-spent youth!"

When we were returning from Spencer's funeral the late Sir Michael Foster told me this story. Spencer detested cushions, and the trouble was to find a chair which was hard in the seat, and yet comfortable. So, as a last resource, he had a seat covered with some inches of soft plaster of Paris, and sitting on that, made an impress from which a wooden seat of an exactly fitting pattern was cut. But, against a certain unendurable fussiness, there should be set the fact that Spencer had a soft place in a heart that seemed adamant, and I know of spontaneous acts of kindness and of offers of help to the troubled and bereaved which redeem much unloveliness. His consideration in little things has an example in the following hortatory but sensible letter which he wrote to Grant Allen on his return from a visit to Spencer in June 1899, only four months before Allen's death. It is a letter which every one who "bolts his food" should take to heart.

"I am glad to hear that your wife thinks that you profited by your stay here. I hope that the corner may

be by-and-by turned completely. That it may be turned completely it is clear that you must improve your mastication. . . . If I had to teach children I should give them, among other things, a lesson on the importance of mastication, and should illustrate it by taking a small iron nail and weighing against it some pinches of iron filings till the two balanced. Then, putting them into two glasses, pouring into each a quantity of dilute sulphuric acid, leaving them to stir the two from time to time, and showing them that whereas the iron filings quickly dissolve, the dissolving of the nail would be a business of something like a week. This would impress on them the importance of reducing food to small fragments. . . . Excuse me for saying that if you do not masticate you do not deserve to be well."

As some set-off to the ear-stopper incident, I may add that when Spencer heard from Allen that I was writing my *Pioneers of Evolution* he graciously invited me to his house to see the original documents of his scheme of the *Synthetic Philosophy*. This evidenced that the theory of evolution, as a whole, that is, as dealing with the non-living as well as the living contents of the universe, was formulated by him some years before the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, in 1859.

A common friend, the late Charles Miall, younger brother of Edward Miall, editor of the *Nonconformist*, to which Spencer contributed, in early manhood, letters on the *Proper Sphere of Government*, told me how he and Spencer had as young fellows taken humble lodgings together in London, and that Spencer said to him: "Charley, I have got £100 a year clear. I shall never marry. I shall devote my time and means, such as they may be, to the development of my scheme of philosophy, and that will be the work of my life." To few are given

the satisfaction of bringing the conceptions of early years to fruition, and among that rare company is Herbert Spencer. My last memory of him is of seeing him, shorn of all dignity, squatting on the floor and pushing the precious documents which he had shown me into a strong box. Among his letters which I treasure is one wherein he says, "Let me thank you for the many efforts you have made to diffuse the doctrine of evolution."

V

Sir William Huggins (1824–1910)
Richard A. Proctor (1837–1888)

An intimacy of more than forty years with Sir William Huggins was brought about by my chumming with a fellow clerk whose father, hearing of my love of astronomy, took me to Sir William's observatory at Tulse Hill. Like Huxley, Tyndall, Bates and others who have made large additions to our knowledge by original research, Huggins had no University training.

His father was a draper in Gracechurch Street, and the studious son, thanks to home support and sympathy, was able to leave the counter in early manhood to cultivate his passion for science, notably in chemistry and allied subjects. His means were only moderate, but they enabled him to build and equip an observatory, which became world-famous through his achievements. Armed with the power of the light-analyzing spectroscope, he added largely to what had been discovered about the structure of the stars and, specially, as to the direction in which, as shown by the relative displacement of the lines in their spectra, they are moving. He determined the gaseous nature of the nebulæ—systems in course of formation, of which the nebula in Orion is an example—and, aided by the photographic dry plate, revealed the existence of invisible stars "as the sands of the sea for multitude." These were the earliest of a long series of discoveries whereby the fundamental

oneness of the contents of the Universe was proved. When I first knew him (in 1865) he was an orthodox but broad-minded Congregationalist. Although believing at the time in a spiritual world, he brought an open mind to examination of the claims of the notorious medium Daniel Dunglas Home to occult powers. The late Alfred Russel Wallace and Mr. (now Sir) William Crookes were among the " very elect " who were satisfied as to the genuineness of Home's performances. But Huggins, possessed of a keenness of sight which Sir William, who is very myopic, lacks, saw through the tricks, and washed his hands of the whole affair. The wish to believe, the prepossessions which, more or less, influence all of us, give the key to the strange fact that men whose ability and keenness in their own sphere are beyond question, can prove themselves incapable of detecting the sorriest of frauds. The mischief done by them is incalculable. For the multitude cannot discriminate: they assume that he who can speak with unchallenged authority on the subject of which he is a master is entitled to speak with like authority on everything else. Mr. Labouchere caustically said that " mere *denial* of the existence of a God did not entitle a man's opinion to be taken without scrutiny on matters of *greater* importance," [1] and, conversely, it may be said that *mere* assertion of belief in a Creative Power and Ultimate Purpose in the Universe cannot carry more weight because the assertor has made important discoveries in physical science. The chapter of records of human credulity will never be closed. The admiration evoked by the earlier writings of Mr. Edward Carpenter may lead a few of his readers to be influenced by his later vagaries declaring his belief in the genuine-

[1] Preface to *Life of Henry Labouchere*, by A. L. Thorold.

ness of "spirit" photographs; also in the existence of the soul, because experiments show that the body weighs three-quarters of an ounce less immediately after death! But Edward Carpenter, to whose *Civilization, its Cause and Cure* and *Love's Coming of Age* I desire to pay tribute, is a man of poetic temperament; he carries no weight in scientific matters. Very different is the influence of a man of the type of Sir Oliver Lodge, whom a crowd of presumably intelligent people are always quoting as the champion of belief in spiritual phenomena. "You," they say, "scoff at the story of the appearance of angels at Mons? Why, men of science believe in angels! Dr. Wallace says that the Creator called them into existence to help him in the shaping of the sun and the other bodies of the Universe! And Sir Oliver Lodge says that in various ways we are being helped by other beings, and you dare to question what these great men tell us!" One can only sigh and say, "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone." [1]

A visit, at Huggins's introduction, to a meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society, of which, on his nomination, I was elected a fellow in 1869, brought me into friendly and, afterwards, close relations with Richard Proctor. I became a contributor to, and, during his absences on lecturing tours in America, assistant-editor of, *Knowledge*. My interest in him was the keener when he told me that, a few years before I entered its service, he had been a clerk in the London Joint Stock Bank. But he was there only a short time; the trend of his mind made more congenial to him the calculations of a transit of Venus than the adding-up of account books in the prosaic service of Juno Moneta.

For years Huggins and he fought unsuccessfully

[1] Hosea iv. 17.

against an exploiting clique of men of far lower type who clamoured for the "endowment of research," which Proctor humorously and truly described as too often "research after endowment." They argued that human nature being what it is, the impetus to work is weakened when a man has a competence for life assured him. "Soft jobs" have a relaxing tendency. But the story of the creation of a costly department of the State, which has not justified its existence, has yet to be told.

Well-remembered faces at those Astronomical meetings are those of Warren de la Rue, who did much for celestial photography; of cheery Captain Noble—also a foe of the endowment-hunter; of John Browning, grinder, like Spinoza, of glasses, and, like him, scorner of ignoble things, caring more for the gain to science through his instruments than for the profit on them; and of gaunt Airy, Astronomer Royal, about whom Huggins told me a story, not vouching for its accuracy! After a distinguished career at Cambridge, the University, anxious to keep Airy in their midst as the man who, in the estimate of all, was the fittest successor of Pond, Astronomer Royal, then an old man, gave him a professorship, to which no salary was attached, and a room for his students. A wit of the day said that the University had given to "Airy nothing a local habitation and a name." Anyway, when John Pond died in 1836, George Biddell Airy succeeded him. He laughingly told how, written to as "Astrologer Royal," he was pestered to cast nativities and tell fortunes. Letters came from Earth-flatteners and Earth-squarers; from poor servant girls and high-born dames. One of the latter wrote to ask him to work the planets for her, to state his fee and what reduction he would make on working a quantity! Every letter was

answered, because, as he said with a twinkle in his eye, "it was his duty as a public man to answer the enquiries of the public." And every letter was pigeon-holed under the general heading "Insanity," with sub-divisions "Astrology and Squaring the Circle."

Like Grant Allen, Proctor was dependent on his pen for a living. But, to the public, it was not all loss that men who, circumstances permitting, could have done much in original work (Proctor did a good deal, as evidenced by his book on *The Moon* and by his theory of stellar distribution) should have used their great gifts of popular exposition to make clear the results of scientific discovery. For the combination of expert knowledge with vividness and clearness of style in presenting it rarely occurs in such pre-eminent degree as in both these writers. Their talk never flagged; their keen interest sharpened their tongues as well as their pens, and the pity of it is that only memory of the flavour of the talk remains; the ingredients are lost. "Oh! for a phonograph or a reporter," as Allen was wont to say after listening to the flow of conversation from Cotter Morison, Holman-Hunt and other good talkers.

Some time after I met Proctor, he had published (in 1870) a book entitled *Other Worlds than Ours*. To the outer world a polemic, ever delighting in controversy and fulminating against abuses in high places, a more tender-hearted mortal never lived. The death of a darling boy caused him to seek consolation in the Roman Catholic communion. In the closing chapter of his book he quotes Bacon as wisely concluding that "to survey the realm of sacred or inspired theology we must quit the small vessel of human reason and put ourselves on board the ship of the Church which alone

possesses the divine needle for justly shaping the course." His perversion came upon me as a surprise, and there resulted a correspondence between us in which I got the worst of it. Let me explain. At that time I was reposing on " the soft feather-bed for falling Christians," as Unitarianism has been caustically defined. Ten years were to pass before my earliest books were to be honoured as subjects of attack in the *Dublin Review*, and of a warning pamphlet by one " Catholicus," whose attention had been called to them by a lady who complained of " the effect produced on the mind of her daughter at school by their perusal."

I was—as the phrase goes—" sitting under " Dr. James Martineau, the eloquent and scholarly hierarch of the now well-nigh moribund Unitarian sect. His congregation included Sir Charles and Lady Lyell, Sir Charles' secretary, Miss Arabella Buckley, the gifted author of *Life and her Children* and other books of popular science; Dr. W. B. Carpenter, Miss Frances Power Cobbe, and other prominent people of the time. Among the treasured books on my *ex dono auctorum* shelf is Dr. Martineau's *Hours of Thought*, a gift on his retirement from the pulpit of Little Portland Street Chapel. Forty years have not effaced from memory some striking passages in his sermons. Preaching on the text " Remember, how short my time is " (Psalm lxxxix. 47), there flashed, with the force of an epigram, " God is the great I am: his verbs have no tenses." Following the delivery of the text, " Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up " (John ii. 19), the sermon was compressed in the opening words: " He who could build a faith might well destroy a temple."

A long time was to pass ere I came to see that there

is no half-way house between Catholicism and Agnosticism; and that the intermediate beliefs lacked the authority which has the glamour of antiquity and the audacious assumption of finality. Proctor had his feet on the rock of Saint Peter; mine were on the shifting sands of Theism. One must either submit to the authority claimed by the Church of Rome as the cocksure infallible guide in matters of belief, or accept as valid only what one's experience verifies, and confess ignorance regarding all that lies outside it. That which the Church of Rome asserts to be "necessary to salvation" is a bundle of creeds and dogmas having no correspondence to realities, while that which science asks us to accept can be put to any number of repeated tests that never fail. Science has not banished mystery from the Universe: it has fed, and will feed, our sense of wonder; while the mysteries, on belief in which theology would hang the destinies of mankind, are cunningly devised fables whose origin and growth are traceable to the age of Ignorance, the mother of Credulity.

So, as I had only the authority of a vague and unstable creed appealing to intuitions that are not in accord, and to documents whence different inferences are drawn, to oppose to an Authority which speaks with no uncertain voice, Proctor had the best of the argument. However, the illusions begotten of his unbalanced emotions were dispelled in later years, and he died an Agnostic. The end was sad, since, ere his dear ones could reach him, he died of yellow fever in a hospital in New York.

Our correspondence was mainly on business, but the following letter, dated a few months before his death, has interest as bearing on the writing of his *Old and New Astronomy:* the first portion of which was pub-

lished six months before he died. The work was put into final shape by the late Mr. A. Cowper Ranyard.

"S. Joseph,
"*August* 31, 1887.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"I must have seemed wofully negligent, but truly between the perfectly awful heat we had here (over 104 in the shade three days running, and moist heat at that) with a touch of malarial fever which pulled me down considerably, and a perfect crush of work consequent on the sudden irruption of the New Astronomy book in my hands already full of other work, I have been much troubled to do letters.

"The volume on Astronomy makes great way all the same. I have nearly got through all the least pleasant parts of the work, viz. the matter relating to the progress of Astronomy—Copernicus, Kepler, Newton and the rest.

"You would hardly believe how much reason I have had to be disgusted at the kind of work I have found in books from which I had expected useful hints. I need hardly tell you I have felt bound to study all the standard works and many works not standard. No man, however widely or (so far as he could) deeply he may have studied, can afford to neglect the work of others, even in exposition.

"Even if I had kept a record of difficulties shirked or avoided, mistakes made by men who have had and deserved a high reputation as observers or college teachers, it would astonish you.

"Dear old Herschel, though, keeps his place in my esteem, so does Grant. Miss A. M. Clerke's book is occasionally useful, but she herself evidently knows

nothing and can only quote other folks' opinions, putting them into her own words, and sometimes, nay, often, showing that she has misunderstood them.

" Will you kindly forward the enclosed to Grant Allen, with my thanks for his always charming articles.

"Ever yours most sincerely,

" R. A. Proctor."

VI

Henry Walter Bates (1825–1892). Joseph Thomson (1857–1895). Paul B. Du Chaillu (1835–1903)

I had the good fortune to have as my near neighbour for some years one of the most lovable, albeit one of the shyest of men—Henry Walter Bates, for many years Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society. His *Naturalist on the River Amazons* ranks among the rare classics of travel. As his executor and the writer of a Memoir prefaced to a reprint of the first edition of that book, a good deal of his correspondence passed through my hands. The letters from Darwin pay full tribute to the value of his researches in the Amazons, where he gathered the material for formulating his theory of mimicry or protective resemblances in animals. To the book itself, when submitted to him in manuscript, Darwin gave unstinted praise. In an unpublished letter in my possession, he says: "I have read your first chapter with great interest. I will give you my opinion, whatever that may be worth, without any exaggeration. I would not shorten a word or a sentence, and I hardly remember any travels of which I could say that. I do not pretend to be a judge of style, for I have never attended systematically to the subject." Another naturalist-traveller famous in his day, John Gould, said to Bates: "I have read your book: I have seen the Amazons!"

Among Bates's papers I found the following tribute to

his book from his co-explorer, Alfred Russel Wallace. After nearly two years' work together they parted company, finding it more convenient to explore separate districts and collect independently. The result was Bates's book on the Amazons, and Wallace's on the Rio Negro.

"5, Westbourne Grove Terrace, W.,
"*Thursday* [1863].

"DEAR BATES,

"Supposing you are still in Leicester I write a few lines to tell you that I have just finished reading your book, from which I have derived much pleasure. It has recalled to me old and familiar scenes which had almost faded away from memory like a dream.

"I am therefore, perhaps, not well-fitted to judge of its effect on the public; as for me it has an altogether peculiar charm, but it is so thoroughly well written, the style is so easy and the matter generally so new and interesting that I am sure most persons who will read it carefully will be pleased and delighted.

"The bits of Natural History are very good, and they too have a charm for me on account of our opinions on such topics which, perhaps, others may not feel in an equal degree. Your vindication of butterfly study at Vol. II. p. 326, is in particular *most admirable*. Your estimate of the character of the Indian is, I think, very just, and you have dwelt upon it so that I think it will leave a distinct impression upon any reader.

"The most interesting part to me is the latter half of Vol. II., as it is the most novel. To others the whole book will probably be equally delightful.

"I see no signs of labour in the style, neither do I detect any of that flowery exaggeration you had led me to expect. There is not a line nor an epithet on

subjects of natural scenery, vegetable and animal life, that I cannot fully support and agree with. On the whole I must congratulate you on having produced so extremely pleasant and interesting a book, which I am sure will delight all who know you, and if the general public do not also appreciate it, it will show that they have no taste left for unadulterated and unsensational books of travel. Thanks for the kind manner in which you have mentioned my name.

" I remain, dear Bates,

" Yours very faithfully,

" ALFRED R. WALLACE."

As is well-known, Wallace, when in the Malay Archipelago, independently arrived at exactly the same theory of the origin of species which was formulated by Darwin after years of study of the problem. But to the end of his life, Wallace rejected the theory as applicable to man's intellectual and spiritual nature, contending that these can have an adequate cause only in the unseen universe of Spirit, in other words, that there was a stage in man's development when the Almighty imported a " soul " into him. At what stage remains vague, and by what method, undetermined. The result, in Wallace's case, was belief in Spiritualism as adducing evidence, through mediums, of survival after death as a definite, real and practical conviction. So he argues, in his credulous way, in his book on *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism.*

Concerning this aberration of a presumably keen intellect, Bates told me the following. When the two were in Leicester, they went to a lecture on what was then called " Electro-biology " or " Animal magnetism." One of the audience was asked to come on the platform

to submit to be hypnotized, this being effected by continuous staring at a strong light until the nerve centres of the eyes were fatigued and the balance of the nervous system upset, the subject falling into paralysis of will and unconsciously performing all sorts of antics, *e. g.* nursing a pillow as if it were a baby, and dancing ridiculously to music. After the two left the hall, Wallace expressed the conviction that the phenomena were brought about by spiritual, that is, supernatural, influences !

The world has a short memory even for its greatest, and my readers cannot be expected to share my interest in any one who may be only a name to them, the more so, as in this case, no words of mine can convey the charm infusing the memory of so rare a soul as that which dwelt in Bates. I recall the happy hours when, his evening employment of beetle-sticking over, the frugal supper eaten—(like Darwin, he suffered from chronic indigestion)—the pipe lit and the talk started, he discoursed on themes evidencing his wide and varied reading. For, unlike Darwin, who tells us in the autobiography which is prefixed to his *Life and Letters* that for many years he " could not endure a line of poetry and found Shakespeare intolerably dull," [1] even music disconcerting him and natural scenery giving him little delight, Bates revelled and rejoiced in all these ministers to the completeness of life. In fact, he was the richer of the two both in mental grasp and equipment, and such letters of Darwin to him as have survived evidence that Bates's masterly suggestiveness impressed him profoundly. Darwin tells us that the fiction which interested him was not of a high order. By contrast, Bates's chief favourites were Thackeray and Thomas

[1] Vol. I. p. 100.

Hardy; he loved the one for the pathos and insight which the shallow folk who call Thackeray cynical [1] cannot see underlying the seemingly cold analysis of act and motive; he loved the other for the country air that blows through every page. He loathed the modern school of didactic and introspective fiction.

The love of Homer, whom he learned to read in hours stolen from sleep before sweeping out his father's warehouse, never cooled; he preferred the Ionian hexameters to the paraphrase of Pope or even the archaic prose of Myers and Lang. Milton and his more immediate successors were favourite authors, but when I brought Matthew Arnold's poetry under his notice, he felt as Keats felt when first reading Chapman's *Homer*, "a new planet swam into his ken." Its classical note, its severity of restraint, its saneness and surefootedness, its gospel of cheerful acceptance of the inevitable, led him to give Arnold the chief place in his appreciation of modern poets.

He had been steadily re-reading Gibbon in his latter days, and had reached the middle of the last volume when he died. He became quite "the old man eloquent" in following the great historian in his stately march through the most pregnant ages of the world's history, dwelling especially on the graphic narrative of the bloody struggles between the factions of Christendom and of the Arabian conquests and their influence on Western civilization. But Dean Milman's notes irritated him; he told me that he thought them, for the

[1] "There are, it will not surprise you, some honourable women and a few men who call you a cynic, who speak of 'the withered world of Thackerayan satire.' . . . The quarrel of these sentimentalists is really with life, not with you; they might as wisely blame Monsieur Buffon because there are snakes in his *Natural History*."—*Letters to Dead Authors*, Letter I, to W. M. Thackeray, by Andrew Lang.

most part, an impertinence. How he would have appreciated the notes and appendices with which Professor Bury has enriched and illuminated Gibbon's text!

There was a wonderful freshness in all that he said and a wonderful magnetism in the way he said it. His sentences were broken by curious hyphen-like pauses. He talked, as he wrote, in clear-cut, pure English, so that had his conversation been taken down not a word need have been altered.

Doyen among coleopterists, every finder of what looked like a new species of beetle sent it to Bates to classify and name. Sometimes it came already named. One evening he showed me a specimen of enormous size which had arrived from South America. The sender was so overjoyed at the discovery that he had named it Jehovah-Shalom![1] He did not say whether he had built an altar to it.

Apropos of Bates's unique collection of beetles, which was the chief asset in his modest estate, and the disposal of which was one of the hardest tasks I have had in a fair number of executorships, I was recently telling a lady what trouble Mrs. Bates and I had to keep the thousands of specimens in saleable condition. Whereupon she innocently exclaimed, "But how did you feed them?" There was silence: then there was explosive laughter.

Every traveller, both English and foreign, who landed on our shores made his way to Bates: every budding explorer sought from him, as Nestor, the wise and practical counsel stored up in the treasury of his rare and ripe experience. It was at his house that I had the privilege of meeting some renowned explorers.

[1] Judges vi. 24.

Among them was Joseph Thomson, who, unlike some travellers of the braggadocio and commercial type, leaving a trail of blood behind them, never ill-treated or lost a member of his caravan, and who could laughingly boast that he was the one African traveller who took a bottle of brandy across that continent and brought it back unopened. He had his "hour of glorious life." A stripling of twenty, he was chosen as geologist and naturalist to an expedition to the Central African Lakes headed by Keith Johnston. Soon after landing, Johnston died of dysentery and the command fell on Thomson. He proved equal to it; he remembered, he said, that he was "the countryman of Livingstone." This was the first of a series of successful journeys the details of which are set down in his published narratives and summarized in an admirable biography by his brother. Treasured is the memory of the Sunday evenings when, fresh from expeditions full of adventure, Thomson would make one of a company which included Bates, Du Chaillu, Robert Brown and William Simpson.

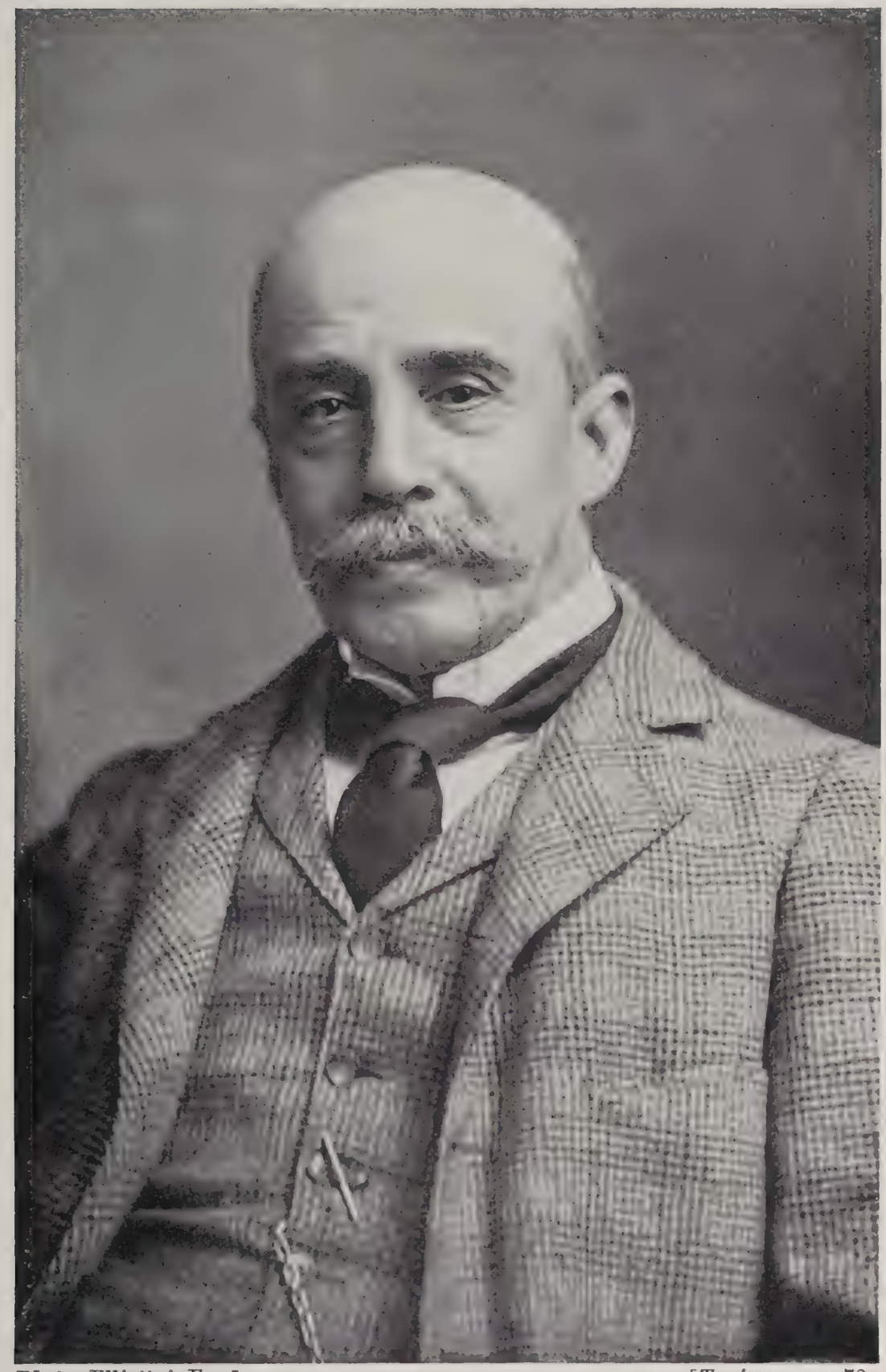
With what gusto he told how, when impaled on the horns of a buffalo bull, he escaped death through an opportune shot fired by one of his men which killed the ferocious beast. Du Chaillu chimed-in with the thrilling account of how he shot his first gorilla. More amusingly, Thomson told us how, when in Masai Land, the cattle were dying by thousands and the superstitious folk were pointing to the white man and his followers as the cause, he posed as a *lybon* or "medicine-man" and frightened them by taking out and replacing his false teeth! One day an old chief brought his wife to him to confess their admiration and seek his help. They told him that they were charmed with his appear-

ance and colour, and that they wanted a little white boy who should be his counterpart. He told them that the matter was beyond his power, being entirely in the hands of the god N'gai, to whom they must pray. This didn't content them, and they asked him to spit on them. All the world over, saliva plays a large part in magic, being connected with the barbaric belief that anything belonging to, or coming forth from, a sorcerer or a man reported holy, is a vehicle of black or white magic, as the case may be. Brand, in his *Popular Antiquities*, says that "spittle is esteemed a charm against all kinds of fascination," *e. g.* against the "Evil Eye." As a curative, an example is given in the Gospels when Jesus mixed his spittle with clay and anointed the eyes of a blind man with it.[1]

Still the couple were not satisfied; they wanted the white man's medicine, so Thomson blessed some Eno's fruit salts and gave them the effervescing stuff. Then he went his way.

We had a good time together at Tangier, where I met him on his return from his trip over the Atlas Mountains in October 1888. We saw the snake-charmers, listened to the story-tellers, not knowing what they said, and saw (I for the first time) a dead donkey in the "sok" or market outside the town walls. He had much to say about Mohammedanism in Morocco, contrasting its mischievous effects there with its influence for good in the Western Sudan. In that year Canon Isaac Taylor had published a sympathetic study of Islam in his *Leaves from an Egyptian Note-Book*, and Thomson was interested to hear that his own views and those of a dignitary of the Established Church were in accord.

[1] John ix. 6.



Photo, Elliott & Fry.] [*To face page* 70.

Yours very sincerely
P B Du Chaillu

Pioneer work in Northern Zambesi followed his journey through Morocco, but at an early stage of his career, dysentery, the white man's curse, laid the seeds whose fruit was death in his thirty-eighth year in 1895. Nearly all his letters to me are filled with a story of intermittent but great suffering, telling of " a grim race with the inevitable." There is a beautifully tender " appreciation " of him by Mr. (now Sir James) Barrie, in the biography, while among the tributes which the news of his death evoked this came in a letter to me from my old friend Eliza Lynn Linton.

" It is strange how little frequency of personal intimacy has to do with Love. I *loved* Joseph Thomson, far more than I had the right by knowledge. But his was such a clear candid sincere nature, one felt to know more of him than one did. . . ."

Of my friendship with that dear woman, traduced in life and well-nigh forgotten in death, something is said later.

Not less secure place in the affection of our little group was held by Paul Belloni Du Chaillu, known only as " Paul." Like more than one eminent man, he invented more than one birthplace for himself. One day it was New York; another day it was Paris, while according to the obituary notice of him in *The Times* (May 1, 1903), it was New Orleans. The truth is that he was born in the island of Bourbon or Reunion. His father was a Frenchman, clerk to a Gaboon trader, and his mother was a mulatto. He was not much over twenty when, " bitten by the gad-fly," he started on his own account on travels through Equatorial Africa. When, in 1861, his narrative of *Explorations and Adventures* was published, it was a good deal, in slang

terms, " blown upon." He was looked on as a sort of modern Munchausen, largely because of the sprightliness and *abandon* of the book, but chiefly because of what it had to tell of novelty about pygmies and gorillas.

Dr. Gray and other naturalists attacked it as containing a minimum of fact and a maximum of fiction. But Paul was maligned. With him is the credit of the rediscovery of the great apes whose existence had been lost to sight since Hanno, the Carthaginian, voyaged to West Africa about 400 B.C. As for the pygmies, these races are found in other countries besides the Congo; and to the folklorist are interesting, because in the stories about " the little people " may be sometimes traced the source of belief in dwarfs and fairies. Paul's diminutive stature, his negroid face and his swarthy complexion, made him look somewhat akin to our simian relatives. Only those of his friends who survive can enter fully into the drollery of the story of his appearance in a Baptist pulpit in the backwoods of America, where he was on a lecturing tour. When the sermon was ended (of the text and nature of the discourse I wish that I had remembrance), there were cries from the congregation : " Brother Du Chaillu, you have told us nothing about the gorilla." Whereupon Paul explained that, being in the Lord's House on the Lord's Day, he did not think they would expect him to do that. Then spoke one of the deacons : " Brother Paul, did not the Lord make the gorilla, and can it be wrong to talk about His works in His own House and on His own Day ? " So Paul, nowise reluctant, narrated some of his adventures, including that of the killing of his first gorilla. (My children will never forget his telling it to them. His vivid imitation of the awful roar of the animal as he beat his breast with his huge fists, and of the terrible

human groan with which he fell prone on his face, made them shriek with fear, so realistic was it.) The deacon then announced that a collection would be made. Silence fell upon the congregation. Then Paul said, " Brother Ephraim, to-day there will be no collection." Great cheers from the congregation, in which the deacon did not join.

When he was in Ashango Land in 1865 he was elected king of the Apingi tribe, I think on the death or deposition of the monarch. But although the honour was unique, there were drawbacks—the harem was full and the exchequer was empty. So, one night, soon after what corresponded to his coronation had been celebrated, His Majesty, who possessed no privy purse and who preferred to remain a gay bachelor, " folded his tent like the Arabs and as silently stole away." But, as he would remind us from time to time, he was " every inch a king," albeit a very short one, and on his stay at my house one Whitsuntide there was a right merry meeting. Never until then having had the privilege of entertaining Royalty under my roof, the health of Du Chaillu the First, king of the Apingi, was loyally drunk by Professor John Rhŷs, Grant Allen, York Powell and Joseph Thomson. The subject of the toast rightly insisted on a share of the bottle, for after all, as he argued, the health of the toasted is of greater importance to himself than to his friends.

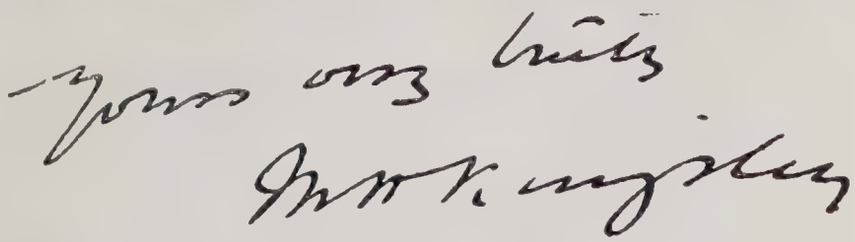
" Hail fellow, well met," was Paul everywhere, whether among the snows of the North or the scorchings of the South, and hence, by way of variety, he hied himself to the " Land of the Midnight Sun," under which title he told a good deal, and doubtless kept back more, of the good time that he had there. But he took himself too seriously in starting on an historical quest whose

result was to convince himself, but nobody else, that when the Romans left Britain, the invaders were Norsemen and not, as we have all been taught, Low-Dutch tribes. The book embodying this theory was published in two stately volumes under the title of *The Viking Age*. It is of no value and, probably, very few people outside the critics ever heard of it. Paul was very angry with Canon Taylor, who reviewed the book sarcastically and severely, and when I hinted that the Canon had told me he would like to meet him, Paul broke out vehemently, "I will not come to Aldeburgh if that old man is there. I should pull his nose."

On his way home from Russia, he was stricken with paralysis and died in the Alexandra Hospital, Petrograd, in April 1903.

Photo, A. G. Dew-Smith, Esq.]

[*To face page* 74.



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VII

Mary Henrietta Kingsley (1862–1900)

In the first instance, I met Mary Kingsley in the congenial atmosphere of the Folk Lore Society, and, next, at Sir Alfred Lyall's. There followed many happy hours together.

"I do wish," she said in a letter to me dated January 8, 1898, "Du Chaillu were in town, for it would give me more pleasure to see him than it would give any one pleasure to see me. I would like half-an-hour over a map with that man. I have stood up for his work right and left, for it was terribly underrated, though all the time I had a MS. biography of him written by an old enemy of his and sent to me for publication which would have blown the roof off any publisher's house in London—not that I have shown it to any one."

The two never met. He was then on a lecturing tour in America, where he stayed a long time. She died in 1900, in her thirty-eighth year. Poor health notwithstanding, she sailed for South Africa when the Boer War was raging, to "do her bit," and while nursing the wounded, caught enteric fever and died in Simonstown hospital. She had the signal honour of a naval funeral; her body was borne on a torpedo boat, and committed to the deep. Thousands of women could have been better spared from the crowd of purposeless lives. It is a stirring and touching story of a life of self-sacrifice which nurtured no hope of recompensing glory in a vision of the martyr's crown.

Daughter of Dr. George Kingsley, co-author with the Earl of Pembroke of *South Sea Bubbles*, Mary Kingsley was one of the most remarkable women of our time. Those who knew her will agree with me when I say that it is utterly beyond the power of any of us to convey the impression which this brilliantly-gifted, most sympathetic and plucky woman—spare in figure, blue-eyed, fair-haired—made upon all who met her. We all fell in love with her. York Powell said to me : " If I were an artist, I should paint her as my type of the Madonna."

She lost both parents in the spring of 1892; for four years she had nursed an invalid mother, and, for recovery from the blow wrought by her double bereavement on a constitution never strong, she took a trip to the Canaries. Passion for travel was in her blood, and in 1893 she sailed for West Africa. Second and third journeys followed in 1894 and 1896 respectively, the outcome of the three being the publication of her *Travels in West Africa*, 1897.[1] This book at once took a foremost place in anthropology and the study of the folklore and religion of the lower races. An Appendix on " Trade and Labour in West Africa " made such appeal to Liverpool merchants that she was invited to lecture on those topics for the edification of Chambers of Commerce ! In her Preface she speaks of the " brilliant apology " which her book requires. She says : " Recognizing this fully and feeling quite incompetent to write such a masterpiece, I have asked several literary friends to write one for me. But they have kindly but firmly declined, stating that it is impossible satisfactorily to apologize for my liberties with Lindley Murray and the Queen's English."

Brimful of humour, she wrote in what may be defined

[1] Followed, in 1899, by *West African Studies.*

as educated slang, examples of which may be noted in the following letters chosen from an unpublished bundle. I should explain that her condemnation of missionaries as making the native African, when they had converted him, the " Curse of the Coast," and her charge that they greatly overrated the evils of the liquor traffic in Africa, brought upon her an avalanche of criticism. Talking of missionaries, she chortled over a story which I found was not a " chestnut " to her. A geologist calling on an ardent supporter of missionary enterprise, saw a map, large portions of which were coloured in black to denote heathendom, when he said to the shocked host, " I had no idea the coal measures of the globe were so extensive."

" 100, Addison Road, Kensington, W.,
" *January* 7, 1898.

" Dear Mr. Clodd,

" I will gladly come on the 19th because it is the first day you name, not because I am going to West Africa at the end of this month. You tell Mr. Milne those papers have turned his brain. I am just off to Ireland, but shall be back on the 14th. I want to ask you some questions about Deification of ancestors—a subject on which I am in trouble just now : *also* on totemism—also on difficulties in the employment of the term fetish. I won't say this is all, but if you will kindly settle these three it will be a great help—you understand.

" I shall be glad to see Mr. Keltie again—but I don't fancy you will get him to come, for I am sure he is not keen on me. Kind he has ever been. He has an amazing pretty daughter, which is an excellent thing in a man, as Mr. Pepys would say, but I believe he thinks all women want to get into his society, the R.G.S.,[1] I

[1] [Geographical.]

mean. Now I do not. I have no objection to his domestic society—but I am not a believer in women in learned societies—and this puts me in mind of another thing which Mr. Keltie and you could help me in—I want an African Society formed on lines I have all prepared. I dare not show a hand in it, for ladies *must* not be admitted for reasons I will state if called upon. Now, if I suggest this thing and say ladies not admitted, my remaining hair will go, and my most intimate friend tells me that wearing wigs forces him into smoking penny Pickwicks, because they, the wigs, you understand, are so expensive. I need hardly say he lost his hair by fever on the West Coast of Africa. Mind you don't reveal my heresies.

"Believe me,

"Yours very sincerely,

"M. H. Kingsley."

"100, Addison Road, W.,
"*January* 31, 1898.

"Dear Mr. Clodd,

"After all your kindness I feel bound to report myself, and I beg to report myself better. I cannot say I am altogether well, as I am shaky on my legs and generally just conscious that I am supremely weak and wretched. But I made my first venture out to-day and was brought home ignominiously in a cab. Still, ten days ago if I had gone out at all the chances were that I should have gone in a hearse and not come home.

"I am exceedingly indebted to you for those two books you sent me; the *Myths and Dreams* particularly, for it interested me when being interested was important. I have a host of things to say to you about it, not critical, but questions as to how you think some of the things

you say work out. I wrote a note to Mr. Lang saying you had told me about his desire for crystal-gazing cannibals, and I had an amusing letter from him that I will show you. Unfortunately he seems to take it as a matter of course that I sort of believe in ghosts, as he does in a sort of a way, whereas I don't. I believe in space and atoms and Darwinism and all that sort of Ju-ju, like I fancy you do, for I was brought up among an agnostic set of the Huxley school. So there will have to be some painful explanations between me and Mr. L. some day, but this is between ourselves. I am just about to publish an article on Africans which will bring me into quite as many rows as I shall be able to deal with for some time.

"I suppose it would be useless to ask you to come and see me some afternoon? I should be very glad, but I do not feel justified in doing so. I live up so many stairs in such an old marine store of a place that I am not worthy of being called on by the civilized, but if you were charitably disposed I would show you some queer things [1] and you could go home from Uxbridge Road Station; only I pray you, if you do, send me a line of warning, so I may be in. Thursday and Friday are the only days I ought to be out this week, though I am at the mercy of Major Lugard, for he and I are at war with each other and we have now and then, behind the scenes, to arrange details of the next fight.

"I remain,

"Yours truly,

"M. H. KINGSLEY."

[1] And she did. One was a hideous human-shaped idol, with a rope of coagulated human blood round its neck. Nails had been driven into every part of its body to "rivet" the god's attention. See on this, Frazer's *Golden Bough*, ix. p. 70.

"100, Addison Road,
"*February* 16, 1898.

"DEAR MR. CLODD,

"I can come any day you like except the 25th and 26th of this month; next month I have no engagements whatsoever, so please let me know which day will suit you. Please forgive me for not writing more promptly; it has been from two things, one my lazy state, and the other the liquor traffic with West Africa. This subject has been a perfect curse to me ever since I said the mission party exaggerated about it and attribute to it things that arose from different causes. I honestly believe I am right. I have not that blind belief in everything that comes out of a bottle that caused one of my white West Coast friends to drink a lot of water containing leeches which a black lady friend of mine had just put down in the parlour for a moment. I merely think from what I know, having said this once, and having published analysis of the liquor they call poison [see *Travels*, p. 664], I should have been content, for my own part, to let them say what they liked, but then in comes another affair. Liverpool, as I dare say you know, hates the Royal Niger Company like the devil. The R.N.C. has got its back against a door, fighting France. I, from my statements over this liquor traffic, Liverpool's trade backbone, have a certain influence with L. and that influence I threw into getting the Liverpool merchants not to harry the company while it was in this French row. I had succeeded beautifully, Liverpool was behaving like ten saints rolled into one, when down in the middle of it comes Major Lugard's article praising the Company up to the skies for its anti-liquor policy—pitching into me and Liverpool right and left. My flock broke away at this, and I have

had a pretty scratching time of it, getting them into the fold again, and have only done it by saying I will answer Lugard. This I have only just got through and sent in to the printer. It is fire and brimstone for me when it comes out, and all Liverpool can do is to put up a memorial window to me. It would be a friendly thing of you to do to think out a suitable design. I fear Liverpool in its devotion to me might select a West African Ju-ju hung round with square-faced gin bottles. I need not say I shall only be too glad to see you any day you can spare time to come. Whenever you feel like doing it send me a postcard and I will be in. It is a great treat to me to have some one, who like myself, wants praying for, according to Mr. Lang, to talk over Fetish with. Excuse this yarn.

"Yours very truly,

"MARY H. KINGSLEY."

"32, St. Mary Abbots Terrace, Kensington, W.,
"*August* 30, 1898.

"DEAR MR. CLODD,

"Thank you most sincerely. I have written to Dr. Blyden, but if you would send him a note to say which place really suits you best I am sure he will come. I have, in duty bound, in the interests of truth, informed him that you, Lyall and Tylor are our three best men. Lyall is in Kent, Tylor in Somerset, both willing enough to see him, but too far off for him, with his slender means, to go to, so if you will see him it will be a boon.

"I do not know whether I told you he was as black as the ace of spades. If this will alarm the Savile you had better have him elsewhere, but his manners are perfect and he is a perfect type of the kindly, thoughtful,

true Negro. I had a specimen of the other type here this afternoon. A man I like and well educated, but who is ready for a war dance any time and who alarms my household, who choose to think that while he dances round me gesticulating, battle, murder and sudden death are in the air, whereas we are only arguing like anything.

" But, of course, Blyden is quite out of the ordinary, a man a head and shoulders above all the other educated Africans, and I enjoy his company immensely. I know so well the sure slow way that form of mind moves and the absolute reality of belief it holds. I really want you to see a big black man's mind as I know you will if you see Blyden. I have to say if, because if he is—you cannot say frightened, because in his way you cannot frighten a negro—but if he don't take to a person, he is silent, civil, but to put it mildly, uninteresting.

" I have so often seen that sort of thing with them out there. Man after man who has lived on the coast for years will tell you these natives will never tell you anything. Well, I always found them quite willing to tell me, when we were alone together, what their wife's mother's aunt's deceased second cousin's cat died of, or anything else.

" I shall be home Friday night, so if you have an afternoon next week to fritter away please let me know.

" Yours very truly,

" Mary H. Kingsley."

VIII

Edward Whymper (1840–1911)

Bates introduced me to Whymper at a dinner of the Geographical Society about 1890. But not till three years after that, when he came to Aldeburgh, did we approach into nearer relation. There he met Grant Allen, York Powell, Henry Moore, R.A., and James S. Cotton (of these four, only the last named, my oldest friend, survives). Of course talk fell on Whymper's scaling of famous peaks—both in the Old World and the New—in Switzerland and the Andes. And, of course, he told the story of the tragedy of the Matterhorn.

The grim, tightly-drawn face, the set lips, the metallic voice, all gave force to the story related in calm tones as if it was of small import and not a notable event in a man's life.

There was never a semblance of emotion noticeable in him, yet, underneath the dry crust, there was a softness of nature which, speaking from my own experience, showed itself in thoughtful little acts. The first time he came he brought me his *Scrambles amongst the Alps in the Years 1860–1869*—a valued addition to the gifts I have received from many authors. His humour was sardonic. On this first visit, when called to breakfast and asked if he took porridge, there came an answer, through clouds of tobacco smoke—for Whymper smoked in bed as well as out of it—" Porridge ! I would rather leave the house ! " And I believe he meant it !

In the following year he met Thomas Hardy at Aldeburgh, and never was the man of letters more delighted to hear the oft-told story of the man of adventure. Whymper gave more of detail; he told all that can ever be known about the mystery of the rope which, breaking on the descent of the party on the fateful July 14, 1865, caused the death of three climbers and one guide. In Whymper's words: "They passed from our sight uninjured, disappeared one by one, and fell from precipice to precipice on to the Matterhorn gletscher below, a depth of nearly 4000 feet. From the moment the rope broke it was impossible to help them."

Whymper had to undergo no light torture of suspicion based on rumours that he had cut the rope to save his own skin. But the explanation that he gave concerning the unwitting selection of a Manilla rope that seemed the strongest, and proved so tragically to be the weakest, of three, should have silenced the slanders. The explanation left no doubt as to his integrity in the minds of those who heard it verbally, however much or little that doubt may linger among those who read the story in the twenty-second chapter of the *Scrambles*. It deeply impressed Mr. Hardy, and inspired him when, in 1897, he looked on the Matterhorn from Zermatt, to compose a sonnet published in his *Wessex Poems*, which I have his permission to quote here.

"Thirty-two years since, up against the sun,
Seven shapes, thin atomies to lower sight,
Labouringly leapt and gained thy gabled height;
And four lives paid for what the seven had won.

They were the first by whom the deed was done.
And when I look at thee my mind takes flight
To that day's tragic feat of manly might
As though, till then of history thou hadst none.

Yet ages ere man topped thee, late and soon
  Thou watch'dst each night the planets lift and lower,
Thou gleam'dst to Joshua's pausing sun and moon,
  And brav'dst the tokening sky when Cæsar's power
Approached its bloody end; yea, saw'st that noon
  When darkness filled the earth till the ninth hour."

Should the story of Whymper's career ever be fully told, it will include record of his contributions to geology and entomology, evidencing that he was something more than a daring climber of perilous peaks. It will also include the story of his efforts to keep alive the exquisite, but seemingly nowadays doomed, art of the wood engraver.

In droll contrast to the foregoing, my last reminiscence of him is an incoming with a bag of shrimps and a small jug of cream, a passage to the kitchen to shell the shrimps, and then return with a plate of them smothered in the cream. And an excellent mixture it proved. His departure was followed by a letter in which occurs this commendation of another mixture.

"I send herewith for your acceptance a pinch of sulphate of quinine. A few grains of it in a tumbler of whisky and water improves the quality of the drink." I have not yet put this to the test.

In the spring of 1910 the Wessex poet read his sonnet to the Conqueror of the Matterhorn. It was at Mr. Hardy's desire that, after an interval of sixteen years, the two met again at Aldeburgh. Mr. Hardy brought with him a copy of the *Ascent*, and, at his request, Whymper traced in red ink on the map the track taken by the party in 1865, and I know that the little volume, thus enriched, is one of the treasures of Max Gate, Dorchester. In the autumn of the next year he passed away at the age of seventy-one, at Chamonix—fitly closing his eyes in the presence of the snow-clad mountains.

IX

William Simpson (1823–1899)

The work of another man whose friendship, through the introduction of Mark Wilks, I enjoyed for many years, should have place in the history of wood engraving, and of much else. The career of William Simpson, known among his circle as "Crimean Simpson," was in its variety and interest one of the most remarkable that can fall to the lot of man.

Starting as a lithographer—"Clyde-built," as he loved to say—he was a native of Glasgow. He came to London in 1851, and three years afterwards, on the outbreak of the Crimean War, accepted a commission from the Colnaghis to go as their artist to make sketches of the war. He witnessed, and to some extent shared in, the horrors of Balaclava and followed the campaign to the fall of Sebastopol. One indirect result of our wars is to Anglicize the menu, and he told me how, on his return to Constantinople, entering a dining-shop, he saw "Ouarsh-too" on the list. Curious as to the strange dish, he ordered it, and found that it was the homely "Irish stew!" His admirable sketches brought him under Royal notice, with commissions from the Queen for drawings which, for aught that I know, hang on the walls of, or rest in portfolios in, Windsor Castle. Up to the time of his marriage, which was late in life, he had rooms at 64, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and many a good time we had with him there on his return from

Abyssinia, or India, or China, or America, as the case might be. One day a Royal command compelled a postponement of the evening's junketing. Simpson was summoned to Windsor. Of course, he had to hear the old joke about Sir Benjamin Brodie, Sergeant-surgeon to Her Majesty. The students to whom he was to lecture read on the blackboard the announcement that Sir Benjamin had to postpone the engagement "being commanded to attend upon the Queen." One of the students chalked underneath: "God save the Queen!"

Landing at Dover after one of his many travels, Simpson heard the following dialogue between a lady and a Customs House officer. "Have you anything to declare, madam?" "No, there is only wearing apparel in my trunk." "I must ask you to open it." The examination disclosed a row of bottles of brandy. "Do you call these wearing apparel, madam?" "Oh! yes, they are my husband's nightcaps."

The story of Simpson's life-work is largely the story of our own times. It may be said, with a touch of exaggeration, that he saw every one of note and every place of interest. There was not any event of importance, from the Crimean War to the Franco-German War, which was not depicted by his pencil or described by his pen. And he was so much more than an artist. His interest in the history, and his knowledge, of ancient architecture, has evidence in many valuable, and now rare, papers. He was keenly interested in research into the origin of primitive cults. He took advantage of his travels to make a series of remarkable drawings of phallic symbols copied from the temples of the East and other parts, the unknown fate of which is to be deplored. The worship of the emblems of

fertility is the outward and visible sign of man's sense of the mystery of generation and the lewdness which is associated with that worship must not blind us to its deep religious significance. Simpson's book on *The Buddhist Praying Wheel: Circular movements in Custom and Religious Ritual* is a valuable contribution to the history of symbolic ritual. A hymn learned in my boyhood says that "The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone." But if he genuflects in person, he sings his hymns by deputy, since, as Simpson shows, the praying-wheel is really a praising-wheel, having sacred words written on it. Evading the jealously-guarded frontier of Tibet, he secured a fine specimen of the "wheel," the use of which, he tells us, is a wise economy of the devotee, who sometimes puts it into running water to turn it. He was not fortunate enough to see a Mahatma, he told me.

Here is a characteristic letter from him.

"Hotel Golden Ship, Eisleben,
"*November* 8, 1883.

"My Dear Clodd,

"I learn this morning that you have sent an invitation to No. 19 [*i. e.* to his house at Willesden]. I believe that will be officially answered by the Authorities at that place, but it seems to me that it will interest you to get a note at this time from Luther's birthplace.

"I went to Worms and saw the Luther Drama there. [The occasion was the quadricentennial of Luther's birth.] And then I got to Wittenberg and saw the anniversary ceremony at that place of nailing the thesis on the Church door. I came here last Sunday and hope to leave on Saturday as soon as the ceremony is

over. So I may get the material in the Strand [he was acting as artist of the *Illustrated London News*] in time to be out on the Saturday following.

"I sent a long letter yesterday to the *Daily News* and it may appear on Saturday. If you see it, you will learn a good deal about Luther's birthplace, and about what is going on here.

"I have thrown away Brahminism and Buddhism for the time being. Nirvana is nothing, and as for the Noble Eightfold Path, I renounce it. Justification by Faith is all in all. I feel Protestant to the backbone, and should like to have a few Papal Bulls to destroy. I am bringing home some acorns from the oak at Wittenberg and I hope to have a tree at Willesden of my own. Should the Scarlet Thingummybob send any Bulls there we will be prepared.

"The way the people here get up their costume processions has quite delighted me.

"From yours very truly,

"William Simpson."

Whether from the acorns there sprang oaks at Willesden I cannot say. *Tempus edax rerum:* what would I not do to keep the memory of William Simpson fresh and lasting! Despite all that he did, one fears that his name is among those "writ in water." He is remembered only by a few—a vanishing number—as the enthusiast, who, when acting as special artist of the *Illustrated London News* on the Afghan Boundary Commission in 1884, rode to Naishapur to make a drawing of the tomb of Omar Khayyám and to gather hips from the rose bushes growing near it. These were fittingly sent to Bernard Quaritch, the publisher of FitzGerald's "mashed-up Omar," as he called his translation. From

the letter, too long to be fully printed here, I quote the salient part.

"Naishapur,
"*October* 27, 1884.

"DEAR MR. QUARITCH,

"From the association of your name with that of Omar Khayyám I feel sure that what I enclose in this letter will be acceptable. The rose-leaves I gathered to-day, growing beside the tomb of the poet at this place, and the seeds are from the same bushes on which the leaves grew. In all probability they are the particular kind of roses Omar Khayyám was so fond of watching as he pondered and composed his verses. . . . I hope you will be able to grow them in England. . . .

"Yours very truly,
"WILLIAM SIMPSON."

How, by happy chance, he told me of this some years afterwards, and wondered at the fate of the seeds; how this put me on the quest, with result of hearing that they had been sent to Kew; how, with the help of Sir Thiselton Dyer, there were found puny plants which had sprung from them; how, by his directions, these were grafted on a sweet-briar bush, cuttings from which were in due time taken to be planted by the grave of Edward FitzGerald; are not these things faithfully recorded in the *Book of the Omar Khayyám Club?*

The rarity of that *Book* warrants the insertion of two poems written on the occasion of the pilgrimage of some members of the Club to plant the, now lusty, bushes. One is by Mr. Edmund Gosse, C.B., "volunteer laureate," as he described himself; the other is by a second "volunteer," Grant Allen.

"Reign here, triumphant Rose from Omar's grave,
Borne by a fakir o'er the Persian wave;
Reign with fresh pride, since here a heart is sleeping
That double glory to your Master gave.

Hither let many a pilgrim-step be bent
To greet the Rose re-risen in banishment;
Here richer crimsons may its cup be keeping
That brimmed it ere from Naishapur it went."

E. G.

"Here, on FitzGerald's grave, from Omar's tomb,
To lay fit tribute pilgrim singers flock:
Long with a double fragrance may it bloom,
This Rose of Iran on an English stock."[2]

G. A.

In connection with the function of the planting a protest came from the then Rector of Boulge. "His body is buried in peace, but his name liveth for evermore" among Omarians. "I *personally*," he wrote to me, "cannot object to your proposal of planting a *rose tree* with a fence or rail for its protection at the *head* of Mr. Edward FitzGerald's grave in Boulge churchyard, though I should *much prefer* the proposed plate of inscription having no reference to a *heathen philosopher* which I cannot but think out of place in a *Christian Churchyard*." The letter has as many italics as a lady's.

X

Edward FitzGerald (1809–1883)

Virgilium vidi tantum. The quotation is not inapt, for did not FitzGerald say, " Horace never made my eyes wet as dear old Virgil does " ? One June morning, many years ago—the exact date is forgotten—walking near my house with a fellow townsman, there approached, with slow gait, a tall, sea-bronzed man wrapped in a big cloak and wearing a slouch hat kept on with a handkerchief tied under the chin. " Don't you know who that is coming along ? " said my friend, adding, " That's FitzGerald. He has written some poetry : you know they say he's . . ." and my friend tapped finger on forehead. He introduced me, and there passed between " Old Fitz " and myself a few commonplaces about the weather and the fishing. He was often at Aldeburgh [1]— " There is no sea like the Aldeburgh sea," he said, but as I was for some years able to go there only at week-ends and holidays this was my first and last sight of him. I cannot make the tame incident interesting.

So much has been written by many pens about him that there is nothing new to be said, and but for this brief personal description of him, there is small warrant for reference in these pages. But I had the privilege of knowing a venerable and cultured lady, now deceased,

[1] He usually sailed from the Deben to the Alde in his little yacht the *Scandal*, so named, he said, because " that was the staple product of Woodbridge."

for whom, all through his life, there was a warm corner in his heart. Of her he writes, in a letter to Fanny Kemble three years before his death, as follows—

"Mary Lynn[1]—a pretty name—who is of our age and played with me when we both were children at that very same Aldeburgh—is gone over to those mountains which you are so fond of, having the same passion for them as you have. I have asked her to meet me at that Aldeburgh—that we might ramble together along that beach where once we played, but she was gone."

There is another delightful letter in which he says—

"I have been again to Aldeburgh when my contemporary old Beauty, Mary Lynn, was staying there, and pleasant evenings enough we had talking of other days, and she reading to me some of her Mudie Books, finishing with a nice little supper and some hot grog for me which I carried back to the fire, and *set on the carpet.*"

Miss Lynn was a niece of Major Moor of Bealings, an authority on Hindu mythology and allied subjects. He is more widely known as the writer of a book entitled *Bealings Bells*, wherein he records the mysterious ringing of his housebells, at intervals, for fifty-three days. He was satisfied that this was "by no human agency." But, on his own showing, a more incompetent witness was not possible. However, the ever-credulous spiritualists accepted his testimony as unchallengeable, and added the ringing to the stock of horseplay indulged in by spirits, probably as diversion from the boredom of

[1] Her portrait is given in Thomas Wright's *Life of Edward FitzGerald*, Vol. II. p. 203.

their surroundings. Miss Lynn's relations with the Major brought her into literary circles which made her society interesting. I was selfishly glad to lend her books from time to time, because this gave me excuse, when taking them, for getting talks with her. These, occasionally, fell upon "Edward," as she always called him. She told me that the letters between them were too familiar for her to accede to a request from Mr. Aldis Wright to include them in his collection. I was permitted to see a few, and, of her courtesy, was allowed to make a copy of the following—

"Woodbridge,
"*December* 9, 1868.

"I can't find any copy of Sir Thomas Browne which you write about. *Two* of his works you would read or read as much of as any one does read: the *Urn Burial* and *Religio Medici*. They are both *quaint*, but both have their fine passages, and the *Urn Burial* has a last chapter or two not to be paralleled in our language. There may be things as fine—or finer—but nothing as fine in their way: which is a fine way. It is exactly like the most solemn organ playing one out of cathedral at dusk. I enclose you my yearly note from Carlyle (which I do not want again). You see that it is growing dusk with him too, and the organ beginning to play out. There is a capital—not long—book on America by Mr. Zincke, vicar of Wherstead, near Ipswich. It is called, I think, *Last Winter in America*—with table-talk of what he heard and saw there. It is quite unaffected, simple and I think impartial, praising country and people on the whole, but not believing they will pay their debt.

"I have seen the bridegroom with a new coat and sub-cerulean necktie; alert, loud, long striding and

debonair as before marriage. No one could have carried off the whole business with better grace, holding his own and going his way gallantly, but the Woodbridge heathen fret and wonder ever so much.

" Yours truly,

" E. F. G."

Here is Carlyle's letter—

" Chelsea,
" *December* 7, 1868.

" DEAR FITZGERALD,

" Thanks for enquiring after me again. I am in my usual weak state of bodily health, not much worse I imagine and not even expecting to be better. I study to be solitary, in general; to be silent, as the state that suits me best, my thoughts then are infinitely sad, indeed, but capable, too, of being solemn, mournfully beautiful, useful; and as for 'happiness' I have that of employment more or less befitting the years I have arrived at, and the long journey that cannot now be far off.

" Your letter has really entertained me: I could willingly accept twelve of that kind in the year—twelve, I say, or even fifty-two, if they could be content with an answer of *silent* thanks and friendly thoughts and remembrances. But, within the last three or four years my right hand has become captious, taken to shaking as you see, and all writing is a thing I require *compulsion* and close necessity to drive me into. Why not call when you come to Town? I again assure you it will give me pleasure and be a welcome and wholesome solace to me. With many thanks and regards,

" I am always, dear FitzGerald,

" Sincerely yours,

" T. CARLYLE."

In Froude's *Carlyle* [1] there is a letter written by Carlyle to his wife from FitzGerald's house, Farlingay Hall, a farmhouse near Woodbridge. He says: "FitzGerald took me yesterday to Aldeburgh . . . a beautiful little sea town, one of the best bathing-places I have seen. . . . My notion is, if you have yet gone nowhere, you should think of Aldeburgh."

The late Charles Eliot Norton's *Letters* (published in 1913) include one to Lady Burne-Jones in which he reminds her that in 1868 he had asked her about the *Quatrains* of Omar Khayyám, and that she had told him that "the translator was a certain Rev. Edward FitzGerald, who lived somewhere in Norfolk and was fond of boating." In 1873, Carlyle told him that FitzGerald was no "Reverend" and had never named the translation to him. Whereupon Norton sent him a copy, which evoked this reply: "I think that my old friend FitzGerald might have spent his time better than in busying himself with the verses of that old Mohammedan blackguard." [2]

We owe the "old blackguard" a good deal as the unwitting eponymous founder of a Club which has added to "the publick stock of harmless pleasure."

In *Great Thoughts* of January 23, 1897, my friend Clement Shorter has narrated the story of the origin of the Omar Khayyám Club. He tells how, inspired by common enthusiasm for the marvellous translation—it is both more and less that—of the *Rubaiyat*, and by a desire to come into nearer fellowship with the like-minded, a triumvirate, namely, himself, George Whale and Frederic Hudson, asked a few kindred spirits to dinner at Paganis on October 14, 1892. Then and there the Club "came into being." Never did a Club, thus

[1] Vol. II. p. 177. [2] Vol. I, pp. 423–4.

quietly created, leap into such sudden fame or justify the boast that age has not withered, nor custom staled its infinite variety. At its table, in obedience to the command of the Master, "O, my friends, when I am sped, appoint a Meeting, and when ye have met together be ye glad thereof, and when the cup-bearer holds in her [1] hand a flagon of old wine, then think upon Old Khayyám and drink to his memory," there has gathered from time to time a company of the Great Known and the Greater Unknown. With no rules to restrain an irresponsible Committee (apparently formed on the model of the Tyrants of Athens), with no official archives whence a future chronicler could have drawn materials for its history, the Omar Khayyám Club proudly rests on unsullied traditions.

Speeches, record of which, in their wit and wisdom, would have carried the name of more than one orator along the stream of Time to the admiration of generations yet unborn; poems whose place in the most select of Anthologies would have been unchallenged, have added to the joy of the Club's *convivia*.

What variety was infused into the gatherings when it was our good fortune to have the late Walter Emanuel, with his "telegrams from absent guests," of the company! Lloyd George "refusing to have anything to do with a man who speculated in futures"; the Kaiser "not going out just now"; Marie Corelli: "Thanks, but I and Shakespeare are particular as to where we dine. He never goes out, and I very seldom"; Hall Caine wiring, "Why boom a dead Master? Is it not

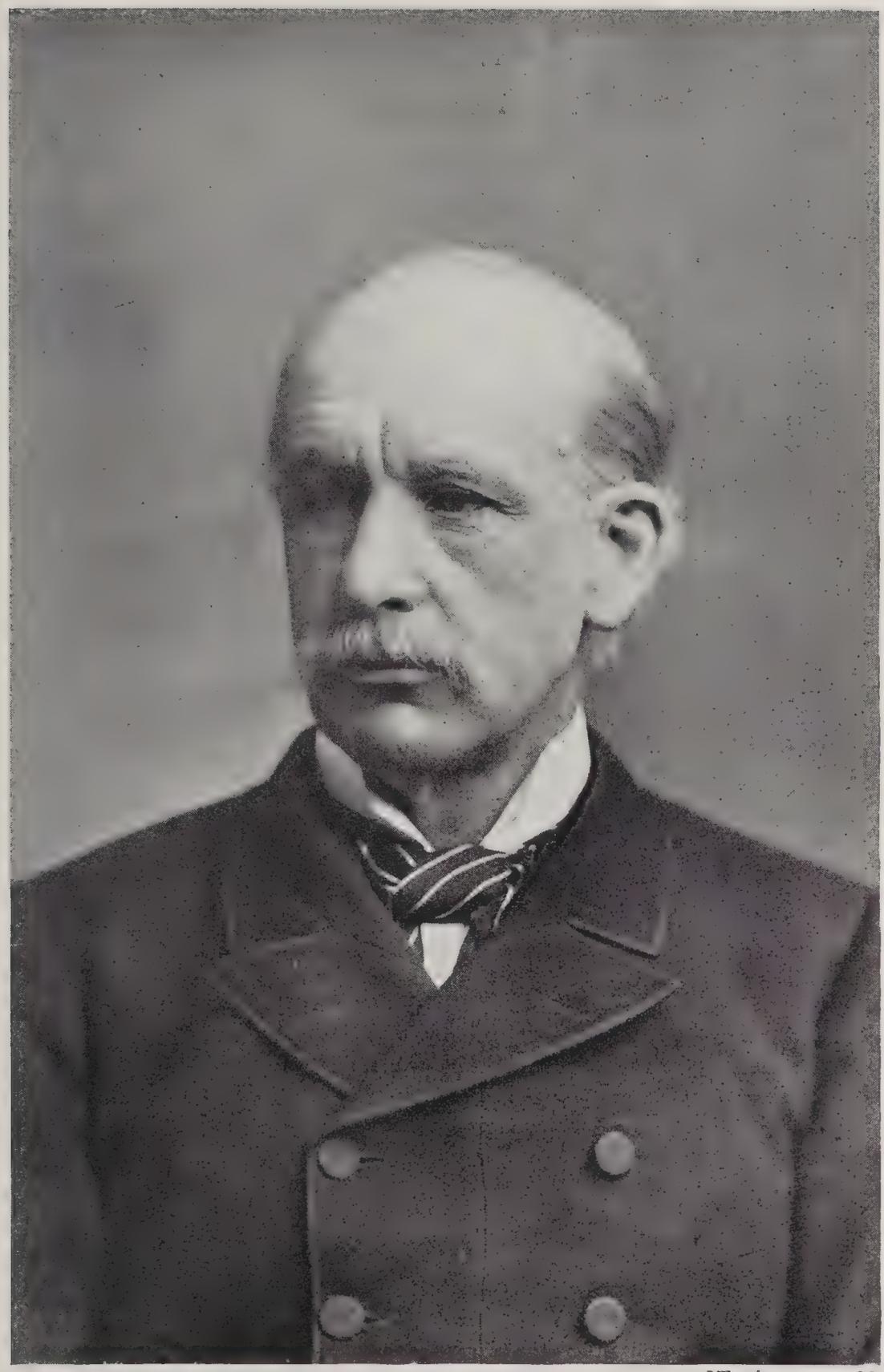
[1] Only on one memorable occasion has the fair sex been admitted to the Club's revels. From its start it has followed the custom of certain meetings at the now defunct Exeter Hall, whose rule was "For Men Only."

rather our duty, my dear brethren, to advertise a living one?" and so forth, as the fun ran fast and furious.

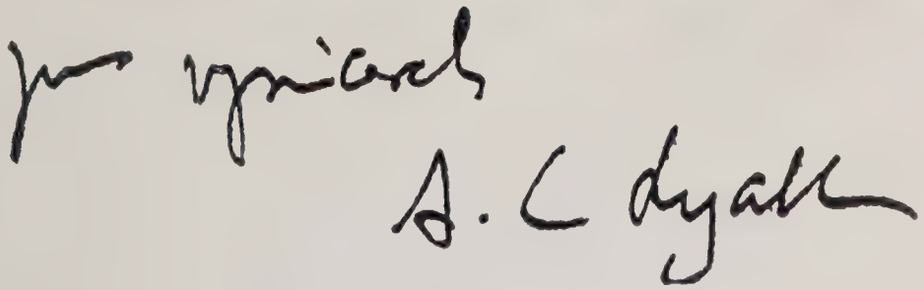
In one matter which it had at heart, the Club has to admit failure. The report on the dilapidated state of Omar's tomb at Naishapur which, after his visit there, was made by William Simpson, caused the Club to solicit the good offices of Sir Mortimer Durand, then British Minister at Teheran, with the Shah, to put the tomb—an uninscribed plaster structure—into decent repair. Sir Mortimer, who, in this year of grace 1916, is President of the Club, has told the story of his interview.

"The Shah said, 'Do you mean to tell me that there is a society in London connected with Omar Khayyám?' When answered in the affirmative, His Majesty leant back in his big chair, laughed loudly and at last said: 'Why, he has been dead a thousand years.' I replied, 'Yes, but surely that is all the more reason for doing honour to his memory.' The Shah retorted: 'No, I cannot order the tomb to be repaired. We have got many better poets than Omar Khayyám. Indeed, I myself——' and then he stopped."

Nor could the presence of the Persian Minister, which was secured at one of the Club dinners through the sagacity of a President who shall be nameless, effect the desired object. His Excellency drank only sherbet, and, consequently, said little. The Club had suspicions that the President was diplomatically manœuvring to obtain the Persian Order of the Lion and the Sun! It was never bestowed upon him nor on any other President. There was aggravation to the disappointed in my bringing as guest a friend (G. W. Thomson) to whom it had been accorded.



Photo, Elliott & Fry.] [*To face page* 98.



XI

Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall (1835–1911)

I first met Sir Alfred Lyall at St. George's Hall, Langham Place, on November 30, 1890, when he delivered a lecture on the *Natural Growth of Religion in India* before the now defunct Sunday Lecture Society. To this meeting followed invitations to his house and Whitsuntides spent by him at Aldeburgh—for myself ever " times of refreshing."

A faithful and fascinating portrait of Sir Alfred's many-sided career as soldier, diplomatist, essayist and poet, has been given by his comrade, Sir Henry Mortimer Durand. There is here no need to sketch in kitcat what is there drawn at full length.

His table talk would make a brilliant book, fit company with Coleridge's and with Goethe's *Conversations with Eckermann*. No printed record can convey the ineffable charm of Sir Alfred Lyall in the intimacy of social intercourse. It was marked by an old-world courtesy which is becoming a lost art. This, and all the kindred graces that attract a man to his fellows, were his delightful endowment. Naturally, the talk would more often be of the East, of whose beliefs and customs there has never been a more accurate, incisive and sympathetic interpreter. His bent of mind, reflective, tinged with melancholy and deeply coloured by scepticism, found congenial employment, when leisure from official work permitted, in the study of the great religions which remain living forces; factors so potent in India that a

man is labelled by his creed and not by his race. It has always to be borne in mind that there is not one India, but many Indias, and that the various religions are their main boundaries.[1]

In the districts where some of his work was centred it was his fortune not only to come into specially near contact with ancient faiths, but to observe the continuous merging of the lower belief in the higher. No hard-and-fast dogmas, as in Western creeds, insulate the old from the new; there goes on to-day the absorption of barbaric conceptions by Brahmanism; the passage of dead, sometimes of living, men, into the ranks of the deified; of ghosts into godlings, to whom a venerable faith accords a place in its pantheon, which thereby retains its own vitality. All this Sir Alfred Lyall has described in the brilliant essays composing the two volumes of *Asiatic Studies*. Every page of these reveals what appeal the magic and mystery of the East made to a man of contemplative and speculative temperament, with a resulting hesitation to theorize; the more so as the complexity and tangle of the materials were borne in upon him.

Whatever comprehension of alien faiths and temperaments he secured was the outcome of a spirit of sympathy. What Sir Hugh Clifford says about the "brown humanity" which he loves is applicable to Lyall's attitude. He strove throughout "to appreciate the native point of view and to judge the people and their actions by their own standards, rather than by those of a white man living in their midst."[2]

It should be needless to refer to his *Verses Written in*

[1] See Lyall's *Asiatic Studies*, Chap. I. *passim*, and Sir Mortimer Durand's *Life of F. M. Sir George White*, Vol. I. pp. 49–67.

[2] *In Court and Kampong*, p. 9.

India. Thin in bulk, they are pregnant in thought, charged with their recurrent question, "And what do the wisest know?" "*Que sçais je?*" he asked, with Montaigne, and herein is the key to all that he has said and written. As some inadequate contribution to insight into the mind of a remarkable man, his *mitis sapientia*, here are a few disconnected notes of his talk at various times.

"I sigh for the old pantheistic belief with its toleration and creedlessness. Missionary work is good only in the degree that it is undogmatic. The old religions are only to some small extent reformed by it. The Hindu mind is not impressed when it hears of the Christian Trinity; Hindu triads are older than that. You talk to a Brahman about miracles and resurrections; he retorts that miracles are always happening in India, and as for a man being buried and rising again, there are undoubted cases of fakirs being entombed and remaining by some means for some time in a state of suspended animation."

"So the Hindu has already what you bring him; inspired scriptures with their stock of myths and wonders, all of which go into the melting-pot of pantheism.

"Why, you will find even the doctrine of grace in the Vedas.

"The puzzle the theologians can't solve is at what stage in man's evolution the soul comes into him. Spencer's dream-theory doesn't account for it: the ever-present facts of death and resurrection may: all we can say is that you can't draw a line between the man and the animal.

"But the gods are our trouble. If you bind them within time and space they are done for; if you keep them outside, then they are useless.

"Yes, ethics are man-made, but there is always

the problem to find some authority, because you must appeal to the masses on that basis. And the authority seemingly has to be an invisible one. So you can't put religion into liquidation." Apropos of this, he wrote in a letter to me: "Religion is an instinct and aspiration, and even as a social institution of high utility is not to be easily or safely uprooted and will long be a mighty force among mankind."

"What the Anglican parsons can't stomach is the refusal of the Catholics to admit the validity of their 'orders'; they want to get on the main line and are kept on a siding. That riles them.

"I think it is Horace Walpole who says that the Catholics give us too little to eat and too much to swallow.[1]

"Purgatory was described by a Protestant schoolboy as 'a place where Roman Catholics stop on their way to hell; it smells badly, but they use incense.'

"Alexandria was a clearing-house for all the creeds.

"By the way, I did not like that story which our friend told us about his sending home some hundreds of skulls from Egypt for measurement as a clue to race. I was tempted to tell him that when Sir George Campbell was Governor of Bengal he sent home two cases of skulls for the same purpose. His orthodox wife promptly had them buried in consecrated ground!

"You can't treat art, any more than you can treat language, as any test of race. The employment of cunning workmen by foreign rulers explains a good deal.

"The origin of caste remains obscure: no one factor explains it: religion, trade, race, all count.

[1] "Damn it," said Winnington to Lord Stafford, "what a religion is yours! They let you eat nothing and yet make you swallow everything!"—*H. W. to Horace Mann*, Vol. I. p. 368, Letter 126 (Toynbee's Edition).

"The wisest scientific men have given up search after origins: the doctrines of Evolution and of the Conservation of Energy give them enough scope for work. Of course, you remember what Bacon says about that." (The reference is: "The inquisition of Final Causes[1] is barren and like a virgin consecrated to God, produces nothing.")

"They have enough to do with the mysteries of Science in the realm of causation to which, as Huxley says, the mysteries of the Church are child's play. By the bye, I was much amused to see the announcement of a book; *The Mystery of Creation*, revised and enlarged!"

(I said that an entertaining essay could be written on "A certain absence of humour in professing Christians." It was suggested when, passing a Congregational chapel in the North of London, I saw posters advertising a series of Sunday evening Lectures. The subject of the last was "The World's Final Conflagration" and immediately under this was the announcement that "Collections will be made for Repairs.")

All through his talk ran the sceptical note, "I don't know: but, then, who does know?"

> "Whereof the priests for all they say and sing,
> Know none the more, nor help in anything."

"Pragmatism assumes relativity of truth. It is better to say that the actual, not the true, is justified because it is found to work.

"Trevelyan said that 'force is no remedy.' Had he lived in the East, he would have learned that sometimes it is the only remedy.

"I grow more interested in the past the older I live. I want to know so much more about those old fellows

[1] Which reminds me of a story told me by Sir Leslie Stephen. A freshman, asked to define "Final Causes," replied, "It's the last straw that breaks the camel's back."

the Cretans and the pre-Mycenæans. I want to meet Ulysses and talk to him. Herodotus is far and away the best of the ancients; he had travelled. He comes well out of criticism. You should read Jebb on Sayce, but Butcher told me he was reluctant to republish it. Xenophon runs Herodotus hard; and what he says of the march, etc., applies through the East to-day.

"Yes, there are Solons still in India. I remember hearing of a case in which a man who had deserted his wife for some time came back to claim her. In the meanwhile she had taken up with another man. The judge decided that the runaway husband should have his wife for six months in each year and the paramour the other six months."

(Not wholly analogous, but suggestive, is the story of the American who advertised: "If John Robinson, with whose wife I eloped six months go, will take her back, all will be forgiven.")

"Max Müller invented what he did not know; all research tends to prove that the heroes and kings of so-called legend—Arthur and the rest of them—really lived. So I am not with the school which denies the historicity of Jesus. But how much stronger is the evidence for the existence of Buddha who lived five hundred years before him."

It will be gathered from the foregoing how often his talk fell upon religious and allied subjects. So with the letters between us, as the following show.

"18, Queen's Gate, S.W.
"*February* 27, 1902.

"My dear Clodd,

"We must endeavour to meet again some day for the purpose of discussing the Controversial chapter

in your book. (*Thomas Henry Huxley.*) My ideas on the subject are hardly worth expounding in a letter and I doubt whether I could put them down briefly and clearly. I am certainly in agreement with those who suggested with regard to the dispute between Huxley and Gladstone over the story of the Gadarene swine that the disputants might have been better occupied, and I think that no important controversialist now thinks himself bound to adopt the demonology of the first century. I doubt whether even the patristic writers of the third or fourth centuries took it literally, and I imagine that the whole question, so treated, is practically obsolete.

" Huxley seems to me to have taken it too seriously. There is to me something ridiculous about his charge against Jesus as ' wantonly destroying other people's property.' Just as it was absurd in Gladstone to try to prove that the Jews were partly punished for a breach of the Mosaic law in keeping pigs. These are nineteenth-century arguments imported into the religious atmosphere of the first century which have an air of incongruity that makes them futile and irrelevant to my mind.

" I myself believe the most miraculous legends, as this one, are always attached to the traditions of a great spiritual teacher who probably had nothing to do with them and would have disowned them if he could have done so. They invariably gather round the figure of some founder of a new faith or worship, however past, in India. I admit that, as Huxley says, if this view be admitted it follows that all other miraculous stories in the Gospels are discredited; but from the earlier ages there has been a tendency not to take these stories literally, and at the present time I don't think that

the literal interpretation was worth an acrimonious controversy.

" You think (p. 184) that if miracles were needed to remove unbelief, they are just as much or more wanted now as formerly. Miracles were quoted, in the old days, I think, not so much to remove unbelief as to accredit a new message. Our theologians might reply to you that when a new message comes, the miracles will reappear, as, in fact, they always do in Asia. Of course, I myself do not believe in the miracles, but I confess that Huxley's peremptory demand for scientific proof of these antique religions seems to me to imply deficient apprehension of their nature and spirit. I conceive his view to be hardly what I should call philosophical.

" Always yours sincerely,

" A. C. Lyall."

To quote Sydney Smith's pun, the dispute seemed to Lyall like that of two women wrangling across the road from their respective doorsteps, agreement being impossible because they were arguing from opposite premises !

Huxley anticipated Lyall's objection as to the undue importance of the Gadarene story. He said : " If these too-famous swine were the only parties to the suit I, for my part, should fully admit the justice of the rebuke. But, under the beneficent rule of the Court of Chancery, in former times, it was not uncommon that a quarrel about a few perches of worthless land ended in the ruin of ancient families and the engulfing of great estates. And I think that our admonitor failed to observe the analogy—to note the momentous consequences of the judgment which may be accorded in the present appar-

ently insignificant action *in re* the swineherds of Gadara." [1]

That was the point at issue. Belief in demonology was rife in Judæa in the time of Jesus. According to the record, he shared a belief which we know has no validity. Hence what value can be attached to any statement that he is reported to have made about a spiritual world?

"On the whole," says the present Bishop of Oxford, "it is impossible to treat His (*i. e.* Jesus's) language about spirits as 'economical' without giving profound unreality to His teaching as a whole." [2]

"18, Queen's Gate, S.W.
"*February* 14, 1906.

"My dear Clodd,

"Many thanks for *Animism*, a closely reasoned demonstration of a genealogical tree which strikes its roots into primitive earth.

"I see that, like myself, you are a close reader of old Hobbes, who was very much in advance of his age, and has a very luminous glance backward into origins. On page 24 Mr. Risley says that the idea of power lies at the root of the religion in Chota Nagpore folk. But the same idea is in the highest religious minds as well as in poor savages. Hobbes, in *Leviathan*, says, 'God is worshipped for His *irresistible power*.' Berkeley and Sir Isaac Newton may be quoted to the same effect. A god that had *no* power was never worshipped in any country or by any people. In short, the lowest and the highest religion and worship have the same roots; but cultivation and refinement of centuries have marked the differences between first and last stages.

[1] *Collected Essays*, V. p. 414. [2] *Dissertation on the Incarnation.*

"At page 17 you write about the dog. It is not *snobbishness;* that, it may be, is not the reason why he barks at shabby clothes, but the same experience that your servant is guarded by when he will or will not show you [? a stranger] into the front parlour. As to the difference in sagacity between a puppy and a full-grown dog, some animals from their birth have great sagacity. You must not banish hereditary instincts, though experience has great influence over an animal's education.

"In England there are no wild animals; the tame beast is a poor stupid dull slave in comparison.

"Yours sincerely,

"A. C. LYALL."

* * * * * *

The last time that I saw him was at Aldworth, in September 1910. I shall not forget an evening when, a glorious sunset flooding the Weald, we stood for a few moments watching the mass of illumined and dissolving clouds. Then he put one hand on my shoulder and pointing the other hand southwards, said, "A great artist."

After dinner, talk fell on the psychology of dreams and, Aldworth being an isolated spot, also about burglars, of whom Lady Lyall had a chronic fear. The next morning he told me that he had had an odd dream. It was of burglars invading the house and of his hurrying downstairs, revolver in hand, to meet them. Suddenly the front door burst into flames, the heat was awful. "I woke up," he said, "and found that my feet were being scorched by my hot-water bottle!"

The late Henry Dakyn came to lunch. As an intimate friend of Henry Sidgwick, letters from whom form a

large part of the correspondence in Sidgwick's biography, there was pleasure in meeting him, because he talked freely about Sidgwick's scepticism, which psychical research only deepened. Some capital has been made out of his supposed belief in the validity of occult phenomena.

Among Lyall's latest undertakings, Sir Mortimer Durand says, was that of "preparing to write, at the request of Lord Tennyson, a paper upon the relations between Alfred Tennyson and Edward FitzGerald, which paper was to have been published in a new edition of Lord Tennyson's *Memoir* of his father." [1] Upon this matter two letters came from him.

"18, Queen's Gate, S.W.
"*February* 15, 1911.

"My dear Clodd,

"I have under consideration some writing, by request, about FitzGerald, of Omar Khayyám fame. It will be very helpful if you can tell me whether any biography of him has ever been published from which I can ascertain facts about his life or whether there are any articles or notes touching upon his ways and characteristics. Possibly you yourself have written something of the sort, or the O.K. Club may have papers contributed. Of course, his *Letters* are the best illustration of his mind and habits, but I have nothing else.

"If you have been reading Keary [2] you will find much to which you will probably demur, and the concluding chapters of his book appear to me weak, but the general line of his argument is, I think, effective.

"Yours very sincerely,
"A. C. Lyall."

[1] *Life of Sir A. C. Lyall*, p. 450.
[2] *The Pursuit of Reason*, by C. F. Keary.

"The Athenæum, Pall Mall, S.W.
February 17, 1911.

"My dear Clodd,

"Many thanks for your reply about FitzGerald. I have taken out of the London Library Wright's big biography of him, so I won't trouble you to send it. And A. C. Benson's monograph I can easily find. If you will kindly send me some day your magazine article on him, I shall be thankful, but there is no hurry, as I shall not begin on the subject for some time to come.

"As for Keary, I commended him to you merely for his chapter on Anthropology. His metaphysical speculations are of very small import.

"Yours very sincerely,

"A. C. Lyall."

Dis aliter visum. The paper on FitzGerald was never written. What Lyall has said about him is in whole-hearted praise of the Letters in an article on "English Letter-Writing in the Nineteenth Century," which appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* of April 1896, and is reprinted in the posthumous volume entitled *Studies in Literature and History*, pp. 66–70. This extract may send the reader thereto. "Here is a man to whom correspondence was a real solace and a vehicle of thought and feeling, not a mere notebook of travel, not a conduit of confidential small talk. A faint odour of the seasons hangs round some of these letters, of the sunshine and rain, of dark days, and roads blocked with snow, of the first spring crocus and the faded autumnal garden plots."

On the 8th of the following April, Lyall went to Farringford on a visit to Lord Tennyson. "Early next morning, there was the sound of a fall, and when the door was opened he was found lying on the floor dead. The weak heart had failed."

Photo, Elliott & Fry.] [*To face page* 110.

Yours faithfully

John Stuart Morison

XII

James Cotter Morison (1832–1888)

Their common interest in historical studies was sufficing bond between York Powell and Cotter Morison. I have spoken on a later page of Powell as having scattered his energies over too many fields to cultivate any single one to profit. In like manner Morison produced little which is adequately representative of his exceptional powers. He was well-to-do; he had great conversational charm, and gave too willingly to society "what was meant for mankind." In the case of both men, the promise of life was never fulfilled, hence the high estimate formed by their private friends can never be shared by the public. Brilliant talker, and none the less good listener, it is no mean loss to the world's stock of table-talk that there survives no record of things said by Morison. I remember an epigram or two; his calling a prominent Liberal Oxford don "a bitter olive"; a still living novelist "a straw fire" [1]; while his laconic comment when reading some letters which I had received from Ruskin was, "insolent capon." From what Holman-Hunt told me, the noun had no warrant.

Like his intimate and lifelong friend, Lord Morley, Morison passed through his Oxford career without

[1] Opinions differ. The late Sir Walter Besant said, in Morison's hearing, that, in his judgment (which was ever a kindly one), the writer in question had "the greatest imagination since Shakespeare." Pulling his beard, as was his habit, Morison's comment was, "The rest is silence."

university distinction. They were among the founders —Morison was one of the financial backers—of the *Fortnightly Review*. When Lewes retired from the editorship, the influence of Morison secured the post for Lord (then Mr. John) Morley. Morison told me, laughingly, "Why, I used to mend Morley's quills for him when he was writing in the *Review*." Morison was also a contributor, his articles being anticipatory portions of a history of France, more particularly of its institutions from the reign of Charlemagne to the fall of the *ancien régime* which he had intended to write. For some years he made his home in Paris. His house was the meeting-place of men of note in politics and letters; in his affectionate nature, his sympathetic charm, he breathed the spirit of *Abou ben Adhem:* "Write me as one who loves his fellow men." There he enjoyed the friendship of the leader of the French Positivists, M. Pierre Laffitte. Their intimacy is shown in this letter—

"Clairvaux, 30, FitzJohn's Avenue, N.W.
"*May* 19, 1887.

"My dear Clodd,

"I am much vexed to have to tell you that I shall not be able to form one of your party at Whitsuntide. The reason is that a body of French Positivists, headed by our chief, Laffitte, is coming over here during those holidays, and both old friendship and duty require that I should remain at home to do what I can to make the visit agreeable to the strangers. I shall have to do a deal of interpreting, as few of the Frenchmen know any English.

"I need not tell you, my dear Clodd, how disappointed I am at this sudden and unexpected interference with our proposed holiday together in your pleasant seaside

home, the delights of which I know so well, together with the benefit both to mind and body which I always derive from an outing with you. But you see I have no option. To go away from London just when Laffitte came here would be almost base on my part. He is an old man, and will in all probability never come here again. I have been for eighteen years on terms of the greatest intimacy with him and I am sure you would be the last to wish me to do anything unkind to an old friend. I was most annoyed to miss you both on Saturday and Sunday last. You had only just left the Club.

" Ever yours lovingly,

" Jas. Cotter Morison."

I first met him at the Savile. The attractive feature of that Club, whose motto is *Sodalitas convivium*, is that members mix together without formal introduction. During more than thirty years of membership, one came to know a large number, especially through the Saturday afternoon gatherings in the smoking-room. There I frequently met Thomas Hardy, Edmund Gosse, Walter Pollock, Rudyard Kipling, Andrew Lang, Dr. Harley and others, the bare recital of whose names would have the dryness of a catalogue. For the interest in such matters lies not in whom you met, but in what manner of man he was, and in what he said.

Morison was in Paris at the time of the Commune. The fury of the mob had pulled down the Napoleon Column in the Place Vendôme, and the little bronze statue of Victory which capped it was carried off by a young man and, for safe keeping, taken to Morison's rooms, where he hid it under a bed on which Mr. Frederic Harrison slept as its guardian. But the thing was too risky to keep, so it was handed back to the Communists.

Morison told me that it was dropped into the Seine, but, according to the story in Mr. Harrison's *Autobiographic Memoirs*,[1] it was thrown on a dung-heap. Of its real fate "no man knoweth to this day." Admirable as are Morison's monographs on *Gibbon* and *Macaulay* (in the "English Men of Letters Series") they do not reach the high standard of his less-known *Life and Times of Saint Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux.* It is his masterpiece: he brought the sympathy of a deeply religious nature to his work. It gives a vivid picture of the Catholic Church in the twelfth century and of the great spiritual, and, be it added, fanatical, teacher who rendered her such brilliant service. He told me an amusing story about the book. Like the conscientious amateur actor of Othello who, for the adequate performance of that part, blacked himself all over, Morison, before starting on the writing of Saint Bernard's life, obtained, through the influence of Cardinal Manning, the privilege of admission for some weeks to a Cistercian monastery, where he went through the severe discipline imposed on the brotherhood. Only those who remember how he enjoyed good living can appreciate the humour of his self-imposed asceticism. The earlier editions of the book were dedicated to Thomas Carlyle "with deep reverence and gratitude"; this was deleted in later issues because of his revulsion against the dedicatee on reading the *Reminiscences.*

Morison's last book—never completed by the issue of a promised second part—was entitled *The Service of Man: an Essay towards the Religion of the Future.* Its aim was the substitution of service of the Known for that of the Unknown—of Man instead of God, "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen how

[1] Vol. II. p. 27.

can he love God whom he hath not seen?" That he was not in entire sympathy with Positivism, a creed which Huxley defined as "Catholicism *minus* Christianity," is evident in the following letter. When the book was finished, his days, practically, were numbered, and he entrusted me with arrangements for its publication.

"Clairvaux, 30, FitzJohn's Avenue, N.W.
"*May* 16, 1886.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"The book which I wish to publish is entitled the 'Service of Man, or an Essay towards the Religion of the Future.' It is, of course, largely founded on Positivist principles, but by no means exclusively so. And as a matter of fact Comte is never referred to or even named. Great harm has been done to Positivism by forcing Comte crude and simple down people's throats and winding up every paragraph in the Liturgy with a 'Through Auguste Comte our Lord.' But that is not the chief reason why I have chosen this course. I differ often so deeply and completely from Comte that I cannot take him as my sole authority, and, on the other hand, to controvert him was not desirable or needed. The object of this book is to show how the Service of God or of Gods leads by natural evolution to the Service of Man, from Theolatry to Anthropolatry.

"Always yours most sincerely,
"JAS. COTTER MORISON."

This letter followed the publication of the book—

"Clairvaux,
"*January* 20, 1887.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"I have not been often more grateful for a letter than I was for yours, for to tell you the truth, I have

been already somewhat sharply chidden for my book by honest, sincere friends whose opinion and esteem I highly value. And I was getting a little crestfallen, when you picked me up, and gave me a real comforting. I admit entirely the mistake of the Preface. It is wholly out of place and should have been at the end of the book and not at the beginning. Also, as you say, such a gloomy forecast tends to blunt the appetite for what follows. If I get a chance in consequence of a second edition I will try and alter that. My intention was to add three more chapters on politics, economics, and socialistics which would have made the book better balanced, but one cannot help such breakdowns.

" Always, dear Clodd,

" Affectionately yours,

" Jas. Cotter Morison."

On the first of March, 1888, a day so bleak that a tent was pitched over the grave to protect the mourners, Morison was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery. Among the sparse company, which included Lord Morley, was George Meredith, who took me, after the ceremony, to lunch at the Garrick Club. He talked of the mockery of the Burial Service which had been read in full over the remains of a man who lived and died an unbeliever, and whose last book was a trenchant attack on Christianity. And he said that if we did not give directions to the contrary, words, all unmeaning to those who die outside the Christian pale, will be spoken at our graveside. These directions he himself omitted to give.

Shortly after Morison's death, it was announced that Mr. John (now Lord) Morley was preparing for the press a volume of essays—reprints and unpublished MSS. (chiefly connected with Morison's projected history of

France). And it was hoped that a memoir of their author would be prefixed. But for some reason the project fell through; the *disjecta membra* were never collected and the Memoir was never written. I know that Morison expected that his papers would take book form, for, during his last illness, he said to me that he wished that his article on "History" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* should be excluded, because he was not satisfied with it. Among his privately-printed miscellanies is a Lecture on the *Paston Letters;* the correspondence of a family of that name living in Norfolk in the fifteenth century. This extract therefrom will show what historical literature has lost in the death in the prime of manhood, of James Cotter Morison.

(I recall the enjoyment with which he paid a visit to Framlingham Castle—the "Duc of Norfolk's Castell of Framingham," thus described in the *Paston Letters.* It was there that, on the death of Edward VI, Mary took refuge on her way to London when the "nine days Queen" was proclaimed. The castle has long been a mere shell, but its walls, flanked with thirteen square towers, make it one of the most imposing ruins in the country.

"Clairvaux,
"*June* 23, 1887.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"I send you Lecture on the Paston Letters, see page 25—three lines from top—for the reference to Framlingham.

"You were quite right about 'salarium' after all. I find in Lewis and Short, the last and best Latin dictionary, this definition—

"'*Salarium*—the money given to the soldiers for salt: salt-money: hence, a pension, stipend, allowance,

salary. It is a lower Latin word and has several congeners, as *Calcearium*, shoe-money. *Congiarium*, a gift divided among the people of the measure of a *congius* (nearly six pints English). Originally this present was in food, as in oil or wine. Afterwards *congiarium* was also used for a largess in money of undefined amount divided among the soldiers.'

" There appears to be no reason to suppose that salt was particularly precious. The soldiers' pay was divided under several heads and salt was one.

" Keene only left this morning for the Isle of Wight.

" Ever yours lovingly,

" Jas. Cotter Morison.")

" On looking back and taking a summary view of the whole correspondence, we must confess, I think, that the picture it offers of the lives of our ancestors is in many respects an unattractive one. A sordid greediness for gain is a too predominant note. Those who are inclined to think that an inordinate pursuit of wealth is a specially modern vice unknown to the good old times will change their opinion on reading the Paston Letters. Persons more engrossed with the pursuit of gain than these Pastons and their numerous correspondents, who belong to all grades of society, it would be difficult to conceive —and the love of gain in those days, owing to the economic conditions of the time, took a particularly harsh and repulsive form. The love of gain is a pretty constant factor in populations of the Teutonic race, but in the fifteenth century it could be satisfied in one way —that is mutual aggression and spoliation. Industry and commerce were in their infancy, and the satisfaction they now afford to the acquisitive instincts did not exist. A man then could hardly become wealthy with-

out depriving some other man of his wealth. The creation of new wealth by working up the raw materials supplied by nature was comparatively unknown. If Peter got rich it was generally at the expense of Paul, who was made poor. There was, consequently, a directness of collision of the selfish passions which our manufacturing epoch with all its evils, and they are many, does not reproduce. Neither does religion throw a softer light on the harsher features of the age. Religion is found to consist merely in mechanical forms and ceremonies and stereotyped phrases, in which sacred names are freely used or abused, but of the higher spiritual life there is scarcely a trace. The fifteenth century is not one of the ages of faith, as the Crusades was. The single-hearted and sublime piety of a St. Bernard or St. Anselm has disappeared, but the forms and ceremonies which a previous age had vivified with devotion were still preserved, and followed with a sterile and dull routine. An amusing instance of this is shown in a letter of John Paston, the younger, who discovered, much to his disgust, that by a mistake of somebody's, a priest had run him a bill for singing masses for the soul of Sir John Fastolf, which far exceeded any outlay for that purpose which he had expected. 'By St. Mary,' he says, 'he is owing more money than I had supposed!' He evidently looks on the matter as a piece of rather sharp practice on the part of the priest, as we might object to charges in a lawyer's bill which might be legal but were scarcely just. He says that he has given orders to the priest to stop singing. We feel we are not far from the Reformation. When another half century or so has passed, facts of this kind will not excite a mere vexation of having been imposed upon, but a spirit of righteous anger, which will purify the Temple from the presence

of those who sell and buy therein. The Middle Ages are drawing to a close.

"But they have not ended yet. Outwardly they seem as fair and vigorous as ever. Dimly as in a dissolving view which has hardly begun to change, we can trace the outline of the coming time behind the actual time. Other institutions, other manners, another architecture, are just ready to advance, as it were, and displace the Catholic-feudal policy under which England has lived for four centuries. But little visible change as yet can be seen. The Middle Age, like a flower full-blown, still stands in that perfection of bloom which immediately precedes rapid decay. The keen air of science will shortly nip its gorgeous blossoms, the rude hand of industry will loosen its roots, and it will disappear. But this is not yet. We are still in the dim dawn of the modern era, when, as it has been well said by a German author, the broad moon of Romance still hangs in the sky, and only a faint light in the east betokens the rising sun of exact science. Whatever men might be, the earth was then exceeding fair to look upon, for it was adorned with a jewelled robe of art which three centuries since have done their best to destroy. Cathedrals, castles, manor-houses, civic and religious buildings of all kinds, still stood in the perfection of Gothic beauty, with not a pane knocked out of the painted windows, or a carved oak stall burnt or mutilated. The castle-keeps still frowned over their encircling moats, spanned by the drawbridge and defended by the portcullis. The England of that age was perhaps not a very pleasant country to travel in. The roads were very bad, and often far from safe. Still, with all the drawbacks, I fancy that there are not a few of us who would be willing to encounter the risks of a ride

across country in those days if we could only do it, and see the deep forests and spacious moors, and the strange large birds that hovered over them. Yes, indeed, many of us would take to the saddle, and join a party of pilgrims or travellers, and listen to their Chaucer English, unheeding the chances of the road as we spurred forward to reach the hospitable monastery before nightfall. The pure air, unpolluted by a factory chimney and scarcely by a coal fire, and the novelty of the scene, would brace our nerves and kindle our curiosity. We might have to ford or swim a river now and then, but the water would be sweet, as it descends from the hills without a trace of sewage or chemical poison to make it deadly to man and beast. With what wonder should we gaze on the quaint picturesque costumes of our fellow travellers, the astonishing head-dresses of the women, and the gorgeous apparel of the men. We should meet archers with their bows, and knights on their war horses glittering with armour. We should be struck with the various habits of the numerous orders of monks and nuns, the splendour of religious processions, the richness of the shrines, and the crowds of pilgrims wending their way to them. Many of us would like to see with our own eyes that distant epoch of our country, which to do would be vastly more instructive and interesting than an hour's lecture like this on the *Paston Letters*" (pp. 33–37).

We generally snatched a day from Whitsuntide to drive to Framlingham, and I recall a witticism by Professor Flinders Petrie when he and Thomas Hardy were of the party. The "Crown and Castle" is faced by a large shop across the front of which is (or was then) affixed in bold gilt letters GEORGE JUDE three times. "Well," said Petrie to Hardy, "you wouldn't call that Jude the Obscure."

XIII

Frederick York Powell (1850–1904). Right Hon. Sir John Rhŷs (1840–1915). Sir G. Laurence Gomme (1853–1916).

It was at Cotter Morison's that I first met York Powell. One look was enough to impress you that you were in the presence of no ordinary man. Tall, well-knit, stalwart, handsome, blue-eyed, curly-haired, and with full, cheery voice, he was the embodiment of all that was attractive. He ought to have lived to a hundred; he died of a worn-out heart at fifty-four.[1]

Unlike Froude and other predecessors in the Chair of Modern History at Oxford, Powell has left only brief and scattered writings behind him. A *History of Early England up to the Roman Conquest* and a *History of England for the use of Middle Forms in Schools to the Death of Henry VII:* these are the only substantive books from his own pen; the rest of the list is made up of miscellanea. His versatility beguiled him into rapid traversing of fields lying outside his true province.

The work by which he will be remembered is the *Corpus Poeticum Boreale.* As his biographer, Professor Oliver Elton, says in his *Memoir and Letters of Frederick York Powell:* "Powell loved heathendom, being himself a heathen." So, in collaboration with Dr. Vigfusson, he plunged with eagerness into the task of preparing a

[1] There is a skilful portrayal of him from the sympathetic pen of Dr. George Haven Putnam in his *Memories of a Publisher*, pp. 209–214.

definitive text and translation of the great body of Icelandic legends and lays in the thirteenth century, enriching these with introduction, excursuses and appendices easy to one who was a master in knowledge of Scandinavian history. The monumental work, issued in two volumes, came out in 1883, and in 1889 the brave tender-souled man lost his comrade: "the wise, good and kindly."

There must have been a dash of Drake and Frobisher in Powell's blood. He would have made a typical Viking, and, since a life of adventure was denied him, his delight was to mix with men of the romantic sort, Paul du Chaillu and Louis Becke, to wit. Becke was a character with a wild career. Born in New South Wales in 1848,[1] his youth was spent in an office which he loathed. Then he started in a small way as a trader and joined an old captain as supercargo on a schooner, these two being the only white men on board. The old man took to drinking hard and had *delirium tremens*, so it was left to Becke to navigate the vessel through perilous seas. For years he lived on various islands of the Pacific, enduring all sorts of hardships and revelling in exciting adventures. He came to England and my friend Massingham (then editor of the *Daily Chronicle*), acutely marked him as the man to sift the genuineness of the extraordinary story with which Mr. de Rougemont startled the town in 1898. I was invited to be present as "honest broker." All that I can do is to refer the curious enquirer to the reports on the interview in the *Daily Chronicle* issues of September 20 and October 15, 1898. I read some time back a story of a widow of a prominent townsman in Wisconsin who recovered damages against the editor of the local paper because,

[1] He died at Sydney in March 1913.

in the obituary notice he said that her husband "had gone to a better home." Such a story makes one careful.

No wonder, therefore, that on hearing that I knew him, Powell asked me to bring Becke up to Oxford for a week-end. With what zest did he listen to the stories, some of them more "broad" than long, of beach-combers and more disreputable rascals. How he roared when Becke showed him a photograph of a "converted" Australian black fellow which, with the descriptive comment, faces this page.

I shall not forget the astonishment of Canon Taylor, who was to meet Powell for the first time, when Powell, having, as usual, missed the train by which he had promised to come, rushed into the study with a bundle of papers comprising *Tit-Bits*, *Answers* and the *Pink 'Un*, under his arm, shouting, "Sorry, old chap, I am so late." The Canon had not met that type of Professor before and looked at me suspiciously as if I had brought in the "Man from Blankley's."

One night, when staying with me at Easter, an offer came to my party to join the crew of the Aldeburgh lifeboat, who were going out for their quarterly practice. There was a high wind and a heavy sea, but Powell jumped at the chance and came back about 2 a.m. drenched and radiant, telling what fun it had been to don a cork jacket and have his dole of grog.

Professor Elton tells a story how Powell's scout, accustomed to his master's disregard of bills, thrust out of sight a letter which looked like a final demand for payment. It contained an offer of the Regius Professorship of Modern History from Lord Rosebery![1] Powell often acted on the principle that if letters are left unanswered they at last answer themselves, but this

[1] Vol. I. p. 174.

[*To face page* 124.

This authentic photograph, recently taken by a Sydney amateur on behalf of the *Sydney Bulletin*—a journal deeply interested in missionary enterprise in the South Seas—will, it is hoped, supply a long-felt want to those who desire to know what the raging heathen looks like after he has given up his debasing superstitions and no longer bows down to wood and stone. This picture will enable the pious ladies who supply funds for the conversion of the heathen to perceive that all their money is not spent in waistcoats. His Reverence is a real parson, and has got 'em all on: holy hat, sacred gamp, orthodox coat, and carries under his arm seven or eight pounds of the Word. Also he is an unsophisticated shepherd and evidently possesses most rudimentary ideas as to the proper manner of wearing his white necktie. He is gazing with chastened sorrow at some heathen English sailors belonging to a trading schooner who are violating the Lord's Day by bathing their toil-stained bodies in a river of the Vineyard.

did not save him from turning up at a house to dine, only to find that the invitation was a year old. Probably he shared the philosophy of the Irishman who, losing his train, said, "Better late than never." To stay in his rooms at Christ Church was to meet the oddest mixture of company, and to stumble over the most miscellaneous contents. His dress, his demeanour and outspokenness were all protests against the stiffness and exclusiveness of University and clerical coteries, to whom a don who wore a pea jacket and yachting cap was *anathema*. "Omniscience was his foible"; he passed without hitch or effort from praise of Henry James (whose novels he told me, not long before his death, he read with increasing delight), and Meredith; to vivid narrative of famous fights, as of that between Sayers and Heenan; from enthusiasms over Japanese prints to talk on the scientific treatment of history. Communist refugees had been sheltered by him. Stepniak was one of his closest friends. Born to be a man of action, but fated to be a man of letters, his hand would eagerly clasp his who had done some brave or notable thing, especially if the man had not been advertised as the latest sensation. Powell would feast him at the "high table" in the historic hall of Christ Church, and then, with brief look-in at the "common room," leave his fellow dons to their port, and carry his guest off to his den, whence would resound laughter that shook the walls within and sobriety without. Better than any portrait I can attempt are a few letters in proof of what manner of man he was. Meredith wrote to me about him: "I had a fond corner for him as well as an admiration for his work without acquiescing in his literary opinions." Here are a few of them. "Froude's style is journalistic and slip-shod. Browning I cannot away

with." He begged his friend, Professor Tout, "not to be mealy-mouthed over Rousseau, *Le prophète du faux*, the eighteenth-century Mahdi, the begetter of more follies than can be counted." "Bunyan's prose intoxicates me with pleasure." "Bernard Shaw is silly to sneer at Science which has given us everything that raises us from the ape.[1] But he is much more in earnest than he seems." "Meredith is a prophet as well as an artist; he has something to tell us: 'We bid you to hope.'" "Tolstoy, good God! a miserable Nonconformist set of silly preachments." "In Hardy's verse there are material efforts both new and beautiful." "Ibsen's *Ghosts* is the greatest play on Heredity since Æschylus and Sophocles." "Omar is a plain, downright man and his 'Message' is only a friendly whisper to them that care to sit near him, bidding them trust to the real and front life squarely. [Powell translated a few stanzas of the *Rubáiyát* which appeared in the *Pageant*, 1897].[2] Rabelais and Whitman are of the company. Whitman is the only man I would cross the water to see."

Characteristic of Powell as a "heathen" was his reply when asked to join the newly-formed Primrose League. "No: there's been too much made already of one dead Jew to fuss about another."

"Bedford Park,
"*April* 4, 1895.

"My dear Clodd,

"I haven't had such a loss as Sime since Vigfusson died. A fine, delicate, sympathetic man. A

[1] The measure of Mr. Bernard Shaw's capacity for judgment on Darwin is shown in his calling him "muddle-headed" and a "pigeon fancier." The sciolist whose stuff will continue to be read "when Homer and Shakespeare are forgotten—but not till then"—gets a well-deserved trouncing in Richard Whiteing's *My Harvest*.

[2] Republished by H. W. Bell, Oxford, 1901.

man both pleasant and comforting to his friends and full of charity to all. I never heard him speak ill to any man. I miss him terribly. I used to go round to him once a week at least, when I was at home and we talked on till the small hours. It was good to be with such a man. He drew the best out of one, saw the best possibilities in one, and heartened one up. Death's busy dropping shots and somehow picks the best out of our little company first.

"The *Book of Enoch* keep till its use is fulfilled to you. The *Book of Jubilees* is coming and there is a good book on the origins of monachism, Philo's treatise *de Vita Contemplativa* (a beautiful example of keen English scholarship) by Conybeare just out. You will find good pickings in it, but of course the bulk of the book is for professional specialists, and discussions of textual criticism. The purport of the book is striking. Eusebius got round it by a bold assumption. The modern apologists can't do that now. Have you read Howorth's excellent letter on the Septuagint? He has made some discoveries over Ezra and the later prophets that are of lasting moment.

"Isn't 'argon' and 'helium' fine? We can make our German friends sit up now and then. You can't help being patriotic and hopeful over such things. So much German work is sham and insincere whenever one tests it, and they brag so over their work. They sicken me as the Americans do. I am getting more and more jingo.

"Is Allen still frightened over his book?[1] I tried to reassure him. There is nothing new or startling in it, but he has managed to catch the Philistine's ear. It is silly to bother about answering his critics and he does not do it well.

[1] *The Woman who Did*, by Grant Allen.

"He is such a good fellow and so earnest, and so deaf to the comic side of things that he has always an open place to be attacked in—and it hurts him.

"Have you read Emerson's *Birds, Beasts and Fishes of the Broads?* It is excellent. What days are you at the Savile?

"Yours faithfully,
"F. York Powell."

"Bedford Park,
"*March* 28, 1900.

"My dear Clodd,

"I have knocked it about shameful, but it won't want any more mending.[1] It does not seem quite so poor and inadequate to its purpose as it did when I sent it to you, and I hope it reflects in its blurred way the real Allen I knew and loved. When I think of him and Shute and Sime[2] and Gleeson and my dear master Vigfusson and Charles and Henry Stone and Walter Ferrier, all gone, I feel that though the noble fellowship of the Round Table where I had an unworthy seat is broken up and only one or two of us left on the quest of the Grail in following the *bête glapissante* like Pellinore, yet I have had good friends, I have met men I am proud to think about, and if they have cared for me half as much as I have cared for them, I have not been badly loved.

"But these gaps in the ring of our lives are too many, Clodd, and I tremble now when I hear of a friend's illness. I know how short a time one has to pass with those one loves, so few years, such a brief tale of days, opportunities snatched from the daily business and the

[1] This refers to his "appreciation" of Grant Allen in my *Memoir*.

[2] James Sime, author of Lives of Goethe, Schiller, Lessing and other works.

daily cares, but the only gold beads in the chequered necklace of one's life. I am so glad I never had the slightest even momentary feeling of coldness in the course of my friendship with any of these men. The hours I passed with them were sunny and unclouded. That is much to remember. But it was to their gentleness, not to mine, that I owe the pleasant memory. They were patient and generous and gave me credit for more than one was worth. But I really loved them all the time and I think they must have felt that.

" You have got some nice bits from Lang. What a good creature he is, how generous he is, and how fair. It was Allen that made me know him first.

" Yours faithfully,

" F. York Powell."

" Christ Church, Oxford,
" *February* 25, 1902.

" My dear Clodd,

" I have finished the book.[1] I like it very much. I think it gives both the *work* and the *man* properly and briefly.

" The ' pig ' controversy you have handled excellently, I think. It wanted stating as you have stated it and the Gladstone attitude needed exposing in its true light. What an extraordinary thing it is that a man with such brains for finance shouldn't be able to throw off the superstitious absurdities of the past. He was never really honest with his own mind. He meant to be honest, but . . . he was a terrific self-deceiver.

" Owen was a . . . liar, simply. He lied for God and for malice : a bad case.

" I hope Becke is better. I wish I could come to you

[1] *Thomas Henry Huxley*, by E. C.

at Easter and see him and you and have walks and talks. They are quiet times of refreshing for me and do me real good. I learn and I rest and have a good time. I have to be in Ireland on April 7 and I have four big lectures to write and all of them to be printed, I expect, besides my regular work. I wish for the sun and mild S.W. again. It is this raw weather with melting snow on the hills when one always gets cold.

"I am so glad Cotton's happily suited for some years.[1] What a brick he is.

"I am sick over this damned flunky thing of a Royal [Y. P. meant British] Academy; pure rot: another obstacle to every one who wishes to *do* something. Gratuitous red tape. How Bryce can join it I can't make out. It's a job of Jebb's, I hear.

"I hope your book will sell as well as it deserves, for then you will be able to buy a large piece of Aldeburgh and will then roost there as a beneficent Dictator (the best form of government, I fancy, after all). FitzG.'s last batch of letters is excellent, as good as ever, surely.

"Yours very faithfully,

"F. York Powell."

There is pathos in this letter written four days after a report of his death appeared in the papers. "He was startled," says Professor Elton, "but laughed, and begged that any obituary notice might be sent for his entertainment."

"Staverton Grange,
"Banbury Road, Oxford,
"*April* 27, 1904.

"My dear Clodd,

"I can't make out how the report arose. I am slowly getting better. It is kindly of you to speak so

[1] As editor of the revised edition of *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*.

warmly of my work and me. I had a sort of 'set back' owing to want of sleep, but opium in tiny doses cured that, and my heart seems to be getting better (the mitral valve leaks) steadily. I hope Nauheim will right me altogether as it has many others. I am still in bed and can't write much. Take care of yourself.

"Yours faithfully,

"F. York Powell."

He never reached Nauheim: he died on the 5th of May following. He was buried in Wolvercote Cemetery. A large company, dignitaries of the Church and of men in secular ranks of life were present; "men who had not met for long and found each other older, men who did not know, or know of, one another." He was buried, by his own instructions, without any rite, and in silence.

Sir John Rhŷs (1840–1915).

"Come to Jesus" was not a call to me to obtain salvation, but an invitation to the College of that name from its Principal when I complained of the doleful dulness of the Common Room of another College. Acceptance of the invitation gained me a friend the news of whose sudden death reached me while writing these pages. The numerous public and patriotic duties which Sir John Rhŷs discharged sadly lessened chances of intercourse with him in later years, but there was no decay of a friendship which, in its warmth of greeting and largeness of hospitality, can never be excelled. Open house was the "Lodgings"; the host, hostess and daughters made you feel at home ere you had crossed its threshold.

Other pens will tell of the romantic career of the farmer's son to whom English was almost a foreign

tongue; who, entering Jesus College, rose by power of brain and force of high character to become its Principal and to receive a much more coveted distinction than his knighthood in elevation to the rank of Privy Councillor. They will tell of a deep and wide scholarship which, on the creation of a Chair of Celtic in the University of Oxford, marked him as the only possible first occupier. But Rhŷs was never wholly at ease in his surroundings. Liberal in politics and heterodox in creed, he made few intimates. When Sir Edward Tylor's health compelled him to leave Oxford, and when Professor Morfill died, he spoke pathetically of growing isolation. As far back as 1898, he says in a letter to me: "My wife wishes to be kindly remembered to you; she is still suffering from rheumatism and I am unable to 'suffer fools gladly': there are so many of them let loose in Oxford this time of the year. So neither of us is quite happy."

As a piece of fun, I recall when, on a week-end visit, he said to me: ". . ." naming a man prominent, if not eminent, in science, "is coming. He sent me his latest book, and I haven't cut the leaves, one reason being that I know 'tis full of cranky stuff." "Well," I said, "I have reviewed it, pitching into it, but the review isn't yet published; so we mustn't give each other away." "But," said he, "we shall be dosed with it after dinner." And dosed we were. Rhŷs made non-committal comments, and I was all the time in a funk, having before me the possible appearance of my review in Monday's issue of the paper, because my fellow-guest and I were to return to London together. The review came out some days later. Talking of reviewing reminds me how Professor Max Müller "went for" Andrew Lang as the supposed writer of an adverse notice of the last volume of *Chips from a German Workshop*, whereas I was the culprit. Lang was too amused

to be angry, and only reproached me with his vicarious suffering as a part of the human lot. Nearly all Rhŷs's letters to me deal with philological subjects, Ogams, Runes and all their kin. But he had a wide variety of interest, as these will show.

"Jesus College, Oxford,
"*December* 24, 1897.

". . . [The reference is to a review of mine of Grant Allen's *Evolution of the Idea of God.*] I am quite with you. I believe in the animistic origin of some gods and the ghostly origin of others; it is significant that no ghost man has ever been able to appropriate any great members of the Greek or Indo-European Pantheon, such as Zeus or Apollo. Allen has my sympathy also: he has found a good key, but he unreasonably expects it to open *every* lock, and that it won't he may be sure."

"Jesus College, Oxford,
"*October* 17, 1890.

"My dear Clodd,

"I read your book [*Tom Tit Tot; an Essay on Savage Philosophy in Folk Tale*] at once, but I have delayed inexcusably writing to thank you most cordially for it. I have marked slices here and there which I am going to steal. I am not satisfied that my conclusion as to name, soul and breath is sufficiently definite, so I have been trying to analyse the matter a little further and I have come to the conclusion that the Aryans must have at a very early date associated the name with the breath.

"But why did they do that? Is there any savage race that pronounces the name, or breathes it in a whisper over the new-born babe *to make* it breathe or *in order to facilitate* its breathing? Or is it owing to the breath being the breath of life; a sign of life, etc., they

would associate the name with the breath? What do you think?

"This time I see you have gone in for laying your folklorist hands on the Ark again. This time baptism is made to fall into line: you will come to a bad end, though there is no Gladstone[1] to be set at you now!

"Yours very truly,

"J. Rhŷs."

"Gwalia Hotel, Llandrindod,

"*September* 5, 1899.

"[After dealing with the distinction between Ogams and Runes.] Have you seen a long and pathetic letter from Mrs. Ward in *The Times* to-day? She is longing to see all who cannot believe in Virgin births—that is apparently the first difficulty present to her mind—duly acknowledged members of the Church of England. If they were only called by the same name of Christians it matters naught that they are ritualists and agnostics: the name is the great thing which would enable them to enjoy the Eucharist together. Somebody ought to present her with a copy of the Australian book[2] reviewed in one of the Reviews by Frazer; it appears that to the Australian natives every birth is due to an immaculate conception. The whole letter affords a curious study in psychology to me and my wife.

"Yours very truly,

"J. Rhŷs."

Sir Laurence Gomme (1853–1916).

The pen is scarcely dry ere it has to be re-dipped to mourn the loss of a friendship of nearly forty years in the death of Sir Laurence Gomme.

[1] P. 210 (*infra*).

[2] The reference is to Spencer and Gillen's *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 124.

The formation of the Folk Lore Society, in which he took a leading part, brought us together, community of interest cementing intercourse. The Society came, none too soon, to the rescue of a mass of oral tradition whose value became more apparent as survivals of primitive ideas, beliefs and customs, when the doctrine of evolution was extended to man's spiritual and intellectual development. What had been more or less a dilettante pursuit became a serious study. Old wives' sayings, fables, folk and fairy tales; in brief, the vast body of superstitions, were shown to have their roots deep down in the primitive soul. While anthropology, on its physical side, is concerned with skull-measurements and human anatomy generally as a key to race; on its psychical side, as folklore, it teems with interest as "the proper study of mankind." It was especially to the collection of quaint and archaic customs, and their survival in our midst, that Gomme gave of the leisure which he snatched from time not claimed by official duties. I remember his keen interest when I told him that in this manor of Aldeburgh the custom of what is known in law as "Borough English" prevails. That is, if the owner of copyhold estates or tenements dies intestate, his youngest son inherits. In some rare cases elsewhere the youngest daughter inherits. And this custom of ultimogeniture overrides the law of the land. It is widely, but sporadically, distributed, being found in various parts of England, and westwards across Eurasia to the confines of China. There are traces of it among the New Zealanders and various other lower races, and that a like system of inheritance may have been in vogue among the Hebrews is shown in the cases of Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and others. The origin of the custom has long puzzled the wits of antiquarians and jurists, and

many explanations have been offered in solution of a difficult problem. The researches of a distinguished lawyer, the late Charles Elton, led him to the conclusion that the oldest customs of inheritance were in their remote beginnings based on the worship of ancestors, whose shrine and altar were essentially the family hearth. The father and elder sons would pursue war and hunting and the youngest son would remain at home as hearth-guardian; with charge to perform certain funeral rites on the death of his father. Hence, by gradations easy to follow, his succession to the hearth and homestead.[1]

Not less interested was Gomme when talk fell on the custom, in cases of private partnerships in vessels, of dividing the shares into sixty-fourths. He told me that among village communities in India the land is held by the original settlers in the same way, which suggested as probable the explanation that the ships of our roving sea-ancestors were, like the lands of these Indian communities, originally tribal. In the old Viking ship, preserved in Christiania, there are sixteen tholes on each side. If the crew worked in double shifts, this would give sixty-four rowers.

So we had jolly talks, whetted by the fascination of the manifold vistas which these and other subjects opened. To these, both in books and fugitive papers in scientific journals, Gomme was constantly contributing, and when warnings of a breakdown compelled his retirement from the Clerkship of the London County Council, he had planned more than one addition to his treatises on tribal customs. There was a touch of sadness in the reply to my letter wishing him health for the tasks that he loved.

[1] *Origins of English History*, Chapter on "Borough English."

" Long Crendon, Bucks.
" *March* 1, 1914.

" My dear Clodd,

" Alas ! I am no longer a youngster as you suggest, and hence the necessity. Your cheer onwards is delightful, reminding one of the old days, and making one hope to have more time to cultivate one's friends and turn to matters which need doing. Thanks and again thanks for your letter.

" Yours truly,
" Laurence Gomme."

XIV

George Meredith (1828–1909)

My first meeting with George Meredith was at Cotter Morison's house in May 1884. Meredith had a sobriquet, wherein drollery was an element, for his intimates. As the author of a life of the saintly Abbot of Cluny, Morison, to whom the term ascetic was the last to be applied, was dubbed "St. Bernard." *Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of Earth* was dedicated to him—*Antistans mihi milibus trecentis* was the modest quotation that followed the name—and when Morison died in 1888 Meredith expressed in brief threnody what loss a circle of loving friends had sustained—

> "A fountain of our sweetest, quick to spring
> In fellowship abounding, here subsides;
> And never passage of a cloud on wing
> To gladden blue forgets him; near he hides."

Mr. Lionel Robinson was "Poco" (*poco curante*): Sir William Hardman was "Friar Tuck"; I was "Sir Reynard." Keen is my memory of the anticipation with which each number of *Once a Week* was looked for, because a novel—*Evan Harrington*—by the author of *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* was running through that serial. But in my acquaintance with the writings of Meredith his verse, small as was then the quantity, had for me a special attraction, and when *Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of Earth*, with its magic "Woods of Westermain" (the quickening inspiration to which was

[*To face page* 138.

GEORGE MEREDITH AT ALDEBURGH, 1905.
Photo by Clement K. Shorter, and published with his permission.

given by his rambles in Norbury Park), and "Lark Ascending," appeared, the enchantment was complete.

"How I leapt through leagues of thought in the days when I could walk," he said, as he lamented the loss of to him the keenest of enjoyments.

His song is the vehicle of a wider philosophy of life than is embodied in his stories, and the quintessence of that philosophy is in the noble poem, "Earth and Man." Quoting therefrom some stanzas that impressed me most, Meredith grasped my hand as one accepted in the fellowship of the spirit. And when, later on, writing about a kindred subject, he said, "when we two touch earth I see that we are brothers," there was set seal to a friendship which was an enriching possession for five-and-twenty years.

When at Aldeburgh in 1891, he wrote in my copy of *Poems and Lyrics* these lines—

NATURE AND MAN

"Where all is black,
Love is the light for creatures looking in
Behind her red rose blush and lily skin;
A lamp that yet we lack."

I shall here attempt no addition to the appreciations of Meredith's place in literature. Of these there have been and will be no lack; here all that will be attempted is a thin biographical thread on which to string a record of conversations as a possible conveyance of some impressions of the talker. Lacking the sonorous voice that rolled from the cavernous mouth and the resounding laugh that came from the heart; the animated face and gesture; the words, Pactolian in their flow, now set down in rigid type, are lifeless as the faded and scentless flowers in an *herbarium*. In loyalty to a behest in a letter which lies before me, wherein he says,

" Horribly will I haunt the man who writes memoir of me," little of what is biographical is here set down. Myths rarely accrete round men of note until they die, but Meredith's reticence about his parentage and birthplace gave rise to a host of legends during his lifetime, none of which he was ever at pains to dispel. That the curious in such matters could get at the facts without much difficulty makes his reticence the more inexplicable. It was known to more than one friend in his lifetime and has been made public property since his death that his father, Augustus Urmston Meredith, was a naval outfitter (the actual name was used by Marryat, when he makes Peter Simple talk about " calling at Meredith's, the tailor, to be fitted complete ").[1] He was the son of one Melchisedec, the " great Mel," who, in *Evan Harrington*, is " struck off the list of living tailors " in the opening sentence of that novel.

Meredith was born at 73, High Street, Portsmouth, on February 12, 1828, and baptized on April 9 following in the parish church of St. Thomas. His mother, so he told me, died when he was in his fifth year, and the father, marrying again, emigrated in the early 'sixties to Cape Town, where he carried on the business of a tailor in St. George's Street for about four years till his return, when he settled at Southsea. The *Cape*

[1] Meredith's oldest surviving friend, Mr. Lionel Robinson, says in a letter to me, " You are quite right in what you say about G. M.'s reticence concerning his family. But he always told me that he owed his education to an Aunt (Louisa Meredith), who married a Portuguese and who figures in *Evan Harrington* as the Countess de Saldar; though she wasn't one." In his article on " George Meredith's Childhood," in the *Fortnightly Review* of November 1912, Mr. Ellis says that Louisa married a John Read, who was British Consul at Lisbon. The reconciliation of what Meredith told his friends about his relatives and his early years, as to which memory must sometimes have played him false, with the actual facts, is difficult.

Times of May 26, 1909, contained reminiscences of, and several letters from, people who knew him, about him. One of these, Mr. B. T. Lawton, says that entering Meredith's shop one morning, he found him in low spirits. He asked Mr. Lawton if he had seen the new story, *Evan Harrington*, in *Once a Week*. He added, "I am very sore about it, as I consider it aimed at myself and I am sorry to say that the author is my own son." Another correspondent describes him as "a smart, dapper little man, very quiet and reserved, a good sample of a self-respecting and courteous shop keeper, and by no means fond of allusions to his son, whose poems were published in 1851." On his personal appearance the other letters contradict one another, but agree in refuting the statement that George Meredith was born in Cape Town. Of his parents Meredith spoke seldom. "My father," said he, "lived to be seventy-five (he died in 1876). He was a muddler and a fool. I have been told that my mother, who was of Irish origin, was handsome, refined and witty. I think that there must have been some Saxon strain in the ancestry to account for a virility of temperament which corrected the Celtic in me, although the feminine rules in so far as my portraiture of womanhood is faithful. Practically left alone in boyhood, I was placed by the trustee of my mother's small property at school, my chief remembrance of which is three dreary services on Sundays, the giving out of the text being the signal to me for inventing tales of the Saint George and Dragon type. I was fond of the *Arabian Nights*, and this doubtless fed an imagination which took shape in *The Shaving of Shagpat*, written, I may tell you, at Weybridge, with duns at the door. I learned very little at school, until I was sent to Neuweid, the learning of German proving a good

thing when my friend Hardman, of the *Morning Post*, sent me as correspondent in 1866 on the outbreak of war between Austria and Italy. But the fighting was soon over, and I went on to Venice, where I wrote the greater part of *Vittoria*. When I came back from Germany, I found that the trustee, by fraud or folly, had squandered the little estate, but enough was left to article me to a London lawyer, Richard Charnock. He had neither business nor morals; and I had no stomach for the law, so I drifted into journalism, my first venture being in the shape of a leader on Lord John Manners, which I sent to the *Standard*. Very little came of that, but I got work on one of your Suffolk papers, *The Ipswich Journal*, which kept me going. Some ghoul has lately threatened to make search for these articles; may the Commination service be thundered in his ears!"

In his *Life of Thomas Love Peacock*, Mr. Van Doren says that under the pseudonym of "Aretched Kooseg" (Wretched Quiz) Charnock wrote articles in *The Monthly Observer*, a magazine started by Meredith about 1848. Mr. Lionel Robinson tells me that Charnock was a "character," a real antiquarian of doubtful morals and for many years one of the "old boys" of the Arundel Club of Bohemian ways and days. Meredith put him (much disguised) into *Richard Feverel* as the uncle.

In 1849 Meredith married Mary Ellen Nicolls, widow of Lieutenant Nicolls, R.N., and daughter of Thomas Love Peacock, whose acquaintance Meredith made through Peacock's son Edward. He very rarely referred to this; on one occasion he said, "No sun warmed my roof-tree; the marriage was a blunder; she was nine years my senior;" on another, "Peacock's wife became mad, and so there was a family taint." Both Holman-Hunt and Mr. Robinson described her to me as a dashing

type of horsewoman who attracted much notice from the " bloods " of the day. Others who knew her say that she was charming, with intellectual gifts above the average. A well-known firm of antiquarian booksellers has on sale the MS. of a cookery book by Mary Meredith, for which she received £30 from the now defunct firm of J. W. Parker and Son.[1] That house did not venture to issue it. Mrs. Charles Clarke, the daughter of the first marriage, contradicting a statement that Meredith was once in the India House (where both Peacock and his son were officials), says, " I first saw him at Halliford when I was seven years old. I remember it perfectly; he and I were great friends in those days even. We played cricket together; he was a splendid playfellow."

The sequel to the marriage is indicated in *Richard Feverel* and told in *Modern Love*—

> " By vain regret scrawled over the blank wall
> Like sculptured effigies they might be seen
> Upon their marriage tomb, the sword between;
> Each wishing for the sword that severs all."

No action for release from the marriage bond was taken by Meredith; death severed it in 1860. A son, named Arthur, was born of the ill-mated pair. On the flight of his mother, Lady Nicolls, his grandmother, took charge of him until he was seven, when he lived with his father at Copsham near Esher. His letters to and about the boy are full of affectionate solicitude, but their natures were divergent and the boy drifted from home, spent some years abroad in various employments,

[1] George Meredith. Autograph MS., *The Art and Science of Cookery*. With occasional notes by his wife, Mary Ellen Meredith, daughter of Thomas Love Peacock. 1849–1850. White Morocco. The greater part of the MS. is in George Meredith's handwriting. For sale by Maggs Brothers, Strand, London. Some interesting extracts from the MS. are given by " C. K. S.," in the *Sphere*, March 25, 1916.

broke down in health, and, finally, returning to England, was nursed by his half-sister, Mrs. Clarke, at whose house at Woking he died in 1890. Some twenty years of happier conditions followed when, in 1864, Meredith married Miss Vulliamy, a lady of French descent, who died in 1885.

> "Who call her Mother and who calls her Wife
> Look on her grave and see not Death but Life." [1]

To what Meredith, from time to time, volunteered about his early years, may be added what he told me at intervals of the long struggle whose end did not come until the meridian of life was passed, the success of *Diana of the Crossways*, published when he was fifty-seven, marking the turning-point. How slender were his means up to the prime of manhood is shown in his supplementing them by reading to a blind lady, a Mrs. Wood, sister of Mrs. O'Shea whom Parnell married after her divorce, and by acceptance of the paid post of reader [2] to Chapman & Hall on the retirement of John Forster in 1860. In the *Fortnightly Review*, August 1909, Mr. B. W. Matz gives an interesting selection of judgments passed by Meredith on manuscripts that came before him.

Fortunately, a legacy came to him on the death of an aunt, Eliza Meredith, and he told me of another windfall from an uncle, in whose debt his father had died. On learning of this, although he could ill spare the money, Meredith sent a cheque for the amount, which was returned. It was posted a second time, but never presented, and recognition of Meredith's high sense of integrity came in welcome shape.

[1] Epitaph on M. M., *A Reading of Earth*, p. 133.

[2] How, in that capacity, "he damned *Erewhon*," is cause of angry, but amusing, comment in the *Note-books of Samuel Butler*, p. 186.

In the earlier years of our friendship, Meredith worked and slept in the little châlet overhanging the garden by the side of Flint Cottage. There, amidst the "high midsummer pomps" of the lingering lights, or in the evenings when the south-wester, which he loved and made the theme of immortal verse, swept by, deepening the contrast of the cosiness within, the talk, now and then reminiscent, ran full and free, varied by the reading of some poem yet unpublished, or of some chapters from a novel on the stocks. Well remembered among these are the earlier pages of *One of Our Conquerors* or of *The Amazing Marriage*, which, he drolly said, *apropos* of questions received about an incident as to paternity therein, he would like to have re-named *The Amazing Baby!* In yet deeper imprint on the memory is the recital, in a voice of organ roll, of poems unwritten; for Meredith's wonderful memory, keen to retain, in old age, things recent, permitted him to repeat without pause the greater part of a poem of the length of "Napoleon" of which not a line had then been put on paper. *Noctes cœnæque deum;* nights such as Cowley sings of in his stately tribute to his friend Mr. William Hervey—

> "How oft unwearied have we spent the nights;
> We spent them not in toys, or lusts, or wine,
> But search of deep philosophy,
> Wit, eloquence, and poetry,
> Arts which I loved, for they, my friend, were thine."[22]

Hackneyed as is the quotation, there is none so applicable to Meredith as that from the *Self-Tormentor* of Terence: *Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto.* His mind, polygonal and agile, touched life on all sides; every pore was receptive to knowledge, ethical, scientific, and especially historical; markedly in all appertaining to his beloved France.

"I wrote verse," he told me, "before I was nineteen; some of it, which I wish could be suppressed, and has not been reprinted, was published in the 1851 volume which I brought out at my own risk, losing £50 or £60 on the venture. Chiefly by that in my poetry which emphasizes the unity of life, the soul that breathes through the universe, do I wish to be remembered; for the spiritual is the eternal. Only a few read my verse, and yet it is that for which I care most. It is vexatious to see how judges from whom one looks for discernment miss the point. There was a review of Trevelyan's book on my poetry in last week's *Times* [1] complaining of the shadowy figure of Ildico in the "Nuptials of Attila." I was not telling a love-story; my subject was the fall of an empire. I began with poetry and I shall finish with it." I told him that Thomas Hardy had said the same thing to me. The attitude of the public towards *Tess* and *Jude* had made him abandon novel-writing, although he had scores of plots in his head. So with Meredith, the critics charged him with increasing obscurity in the later novels, and hence his resolve not to go on with *The Journalist*, *The Sentimentalists*, and *Sir Harry Firebrand of the Beacon*, only the second of which was partly outlined. "They say this or that is Meredithian; I have become an adjective." The reference to Mr. Hardy evoked the remark, "I keep on the causeway between the bogs of optimism and pessimism." This tempted me to read to him the contrast drawn by Sellar between Lucretius and Epicurus as applicable to himself and Hardy.

To the one, human life was a pleasant sojourn which should be temperately enjoyed and gracefully terminated at the appointed time; to the other, it was the more

[1] June 1, 1905.

sombre and tragic side of the august spectacle which all Nature presents to the contemplative mind.[1]

I have quoted York Powell's comment on Meredith's philosophy, "We bid you to hope," and the spirit breathes in these lines written by Meredith in my copy of his *Reading of Life*—

> "Open horizons round
> O mounting mind to scenes unsung,
> Wherein shall waltz a lusty Time.
> Our world is young;
> Young, and of measure passing bound:
> Infinite are the heights to climb,
> The depths to sound."

But if, like Landor, he "dined late," the guests were ever an increasing number. Amusing recognition came one day in the shape of a case of assorted wines from a German firm in London, a motto from *The Egoist* and other novels appropriate to the several bottles being affixed to each. I can speak for the Burgundy as excellent. Although Meredith cared nothing for decorations or titles—he would have refused the latter—it was with regret that, through inability to walk, he could not accept the D.C.L. offered him by Oxford, and the most agreeable association with the conferring of the Order of Merit was the considerate act of Edward VII, who had offered to receive him privately, in sending Sir Arthur Ellis as the bearer of what could not be accepted in person. When the congratulatory address on his seventieth birthday reached him, he said to me, "I know what they mean, kindly enough. Poor old devil, he *will* go on writing; let us cheer him up. The old fire isn't quite out; a stir of the poker may bring out a shoot of gas."

[1] *Roman Poets of the Republic*, p. 361.

"I never outline my novels before starting on them; I live day and night with my characters. As I wrote of Diana and other leading types I drew nourishment, as it were, from their breasts. *Feverel* was written at 7, Hobury Street, Chelsea; so were the earlier chapters of *Evan Harrington;* the rest was finished at Esher. *Feverel* took me a year to write; the *Egoist* was begun and finished in five months.[1] In my walks I often came across Carlyle, and longed to speak to him. One day my publishers received a letter from Mr. Carlyle asking about me. Then I called on them; Carlyle told me that his wife disliked *Feverel* at first, and had flung it on the floor, but that on her reading some of it to him he said, 'The man's no fool'; so they persevered to the end. He said that I had the making of an historian in me; but I answered that so much fiction must always enter into history that I must stick to novel writing. Mudie's 'select' Library would not circulate it, and all the parsons banned it in the parish book clubs as immoral. Some editor has asked me to tell the public through his magazine which of my novels I like best. I shan't do this. The answer given at one time would only express the mood of the moment. Sometimes *Harry Richmond* is my favourite, but I am inclined to give the palm to *Beauchamp's Career*. There is a breezy, human interest about it; and the plot has a consistency and logical evolution which *Feverel* lacks. Then, a thing that weighs with me, the French critics liked it: they said that Renée is true to life. I miss the

[1] A well-known actor, with suitable conditions as to "leg," was prepared to play Sir Willoughby Patterne, and the novel was blue-pencilled for dramatizing. But the matter did not get beyond that, why, perhaps Mr. Alfred Sutro may know. When I said that *Evan Harrington* would make a better play, Meredith agreed, but added: "Find me the actress to represent the Countess de Saldar."

Admiral [1] very much, but he who has looked through life has also looked through death."

The Jameson raid, provocative of the Boer War, angered him: the Laureate's poem on the beleagured women and children in "the Gold-reefed city" was "mischievous balderdash. He ought to be locked up and his pen impounded. He mistakes rant for inspiration. He is a mixture of Dr. Watts and Wordsworth, with rather more of the former." Then, parodying him, Meredith added, "This is the sort of thing you get from Alfred the Little, as he called Alfred Austin—

> "Three cheers for lusty winter
> That blows the hunter's horn,
> And makes the branches splinter,
> And threshes out the corn."

"What surroundings for a poet," said a lady visitor to the Laureate, as they walked in his garden at Swinford Old Manor.

"Madam," he modestly replied, "let me forget my verse for a moment."

"I don't think that Stevenson's fiction has any chance of life. *Weir of Hermiston* was the likeliest, but 'tis a fragment. Neither are his essays likely to have permanence: they are good, but competition is destructive and only the rarest will survive.

"I like Dante Rossetti fairly well, but his pictures are only refinements of the tousled; their thick lips, cut as on a stencil plate, invite a kiss to which they have no passion to respond. It was a pity that he painted 'The Blessed Damozel,' the poem will only suffer by the picture of that brawny-armed wench on canvas. I think that he was influenced by real sentiment when he put the manuscript of his poems in his

[1] Frederick Augustus Maxse, the hero of the story.

wife's coffin." This was in comment on what Holman-Hunt told me—that the thing was theatrical, born of the posing for effect which was in his Southern blood. " Gabriel," he said, " had a copy or knew his poems by heart." He had the poorest opinion of Rossetti as a man of integrity.

" I don't agree with Matthew Arnold that Shelley's prose will outlive his poetry. Peacock was never enthusiastic about him, he said to me, ' Shelley has neither head nor tail.' Arnold is a poor judge; a dandy Isaiah, a poet frigid and without passion, whose verse, written in a surplice, is for freshmen and for gentle maidens who will be wooed to the arms of these future rectors. Keats is a greater poet than Shelley : in this Peacock agreed. Byron has humour in his satires, the roguish element in these is unsurpassed, but his high flights are theatrical; he was a sham sentimentalist. Favourites with me are the whole of Keats and the earlier verse of Tennyson. In the *Lotus Eaters* and *Œnone* (which I could get neither Peacock nor Jefferson Hogg to enjoy), there are lines perfect in sensuous richness and imagery. *The Idylls*, perhaps I should except the *Morte d'Arthur*, will not add to his fame; they are a part of the ' poetical baggage ' of which every writer of a large body of verse must be unloaded." I reminded him that Edward FitzGerald had said the same thing. " Yes, Fitz is good Suffolk soil, the most pleasing of fogies. His literary taste in the classics is quite sound, and infantile out of them. Tennyson's rich diction and marvellous singing power cannot be overrated, but the thought is thin; there is no suggestiveness which transcends the expression; nothing is left to the imagination. He gave high praise to my *Love in the Valley ;* would like to have been its author. You spoke to

me some time ago about his biography, and I told you not to call it that, because it is not a faithful picture of the man in wholly concealing his rough side. Call it a eulogy, if you like; that's what it is."

" Emerson's poetry is as an Artesian well: the bore is narrow, but the water is pure and sweet. As for Campbell and others of kindred school whom you name, you can only call them poets as you would call a bunk a bed. Mrs. Meynell should not have excluded Gray's *Elegy* from her Anthology,[1] but his *Bard*, with its ' Ruin seize thee, ruthless King,' is mere mouthing. I must chide her, next time she comes, for her attempt to belittle Gibbon: the cause may be in the *odium theologicum:* how can a Catholic love him? And, yet, what a tribute Newman paid him.[2] By the bye, you can take back your friend Haynes's book on *Religious Persecution:* an excellent summary supplementing what Gibbon says at the end of his sixteenth chapter."

Talking about the *Browning Letters* to Leslie Stephen and myself, he said, " My first feeling was adverse to the publication, but this wore away on reading them, because of the high level reached. You see Browning's love for the unattractive-looking invalid, and watch the growth of love in her, as it were, under the microscope. You see a spark of life, then the tiny red spot that shall be a heart, then the full pulsation of each blood-corpuscle. So Browning made her a woman, and in

[1] Mrs. Meynell tells me that Meredith approved the exclusion, saying, " I'm glad you left out the Undertaker's Waltz ! " Doubtless this is so; there was a fantastic waywardness in him which explains some contradictory judgments, especially on his own books.

[2] The reference is to Newman's *Development of Christian Doctrine.* " It is melancholy to say it, but the chief, perhaps the only, English writer who has any claims to be considered an ecclesiastical historian, is Gibbon " (p. 5).

them both body and mind at full tension had that development which her father, like all incomplete men, repressed." Stephen admitted the force of this, but said that the publication was upholding a dangerous precedent, adding, however, that the high standard reached by the *Letters* would make all others fail by comparison.

Professor Knapp's *Life of Borrow* had just appeared, when Meredith said, "I never met Borrow; his lack of manners would have repelled me." Stephen told us how he had tramped to Oulton Broad to see the author of *Lavengro*, whom he found garbed in an overcoat that reached to his heels, and, spud in hand, weeding his garden. He said that gardening and books divided his time, and on Stephen asking what he read, he replied: "I limit my reading to the Bible and the *Newgate Calendar*." [1] I remember Stephen remarking with a twinkle, "There is much in common between the earlier books of the one and the whole of the other."

Both he and Meredith agreed that Milton is the one supreme master of blank verse. Book I of *Paradise Lost* is the finest. "The other books," said Meredith, "have oases of fine passages amid arid wastes; all the poem has helped to shape beliefs still current. Some of the conceptions are provocative of humour, material for which will sadly decrease as dogma decays." Whereupon Stephen told a story of the examinee in Paley, who said that "*Natural Theology* proved that if you can believe in a God, you can believe in anything!" "When people," said Meredith, "talk to me of a great

[1] For some time, when a hack author in London, Borrow, prepared for Richard Phillips "an edition of the *Newgate Calendar*, from the careful study of which he has often been heard to say that he first learned to write genuine English."—*George Borrow and his Circle*, by C. K. Shorter, p. 5.

theologian, I say what waste of time and energy, if he were really a great man potentially. When I was quite a boy I had a spasm of religion which lasted about six weeks, during which I made myself a nuisance in asking everybody whether they were saved. But never since have I swallowed the Christian fable. Parsondom has always been against progress; they treat Christianity, not as a religion, but as an institution."

I never heard him apply any other term than "fable" to the orthodox creed. "Was there ever," he said, "a more clumsy set of thaumaturgic fables made into fundamentals of a revealed religion? As for the belief in a future life, directly you try to put your ideas into shape, how unreal the thing becomes! I read with satisfaction what your friend Frazer says in *Psyche's Task* about the mischief the belief has wrought in making people sacrifice the real needs of the living to the imaginary wants of the dead." On the first occasion when I took my friend Nevinson to see him, he said to us: "Every night when I go to bed I know I may not wake up. That is nothing to me. I hope I shall die with a good laugh, like the old Frenchwoman. The curé came preaching to her about her salvation: she told him her best improper story and died."

No Christian creed, with its baseless consolations, but the belief, unshakable, in this oneness with Mother Earth, delivered him who wrote

> "Into the breast that gives the rose,
> Shall I with shuddering fall?"

from the "fear of death." He was a freethinker in the broadest sense of an epithet which, even to this day, carries discredit in the application. "The man who has no mind of his own," he said, "lends it to the

priests." He supported secular education as the only solution of the religious difficulty; he aided with money the aggressive methods of the late Mr. Foote, to whom was addressed the last letter that he wrote, promising support to the *Freethinker*.[1] He thus showed himself more in sympathy with these methods than with the persuasive and patient policy of the Rationalist Press Association, which works on the lines laid down by Lord Morley—" we do not attack, we explain." This rejection of the " fable " did not affect the friendliest relations with clericals of the more liberal type, as Canon Jessopp and Edward Hawkins (both since gathered to their fathers), in whom he saw some possible leaven for lightening the stodgy mass. What Cotter Morison has said of Gibbon, " he had no ear for the finer vibrations of the spirit," could not be said of him, quick as was his response to every influence borne in from the Nature in fellowship with which he " lived, moved, and had his being." Nature and spirit were to him one, the expression of " those firm laws which we name Gods," and in his disbelief in a personal God and a future life he emphasized the more the oneness which subsisted between Mother Earth and man, and the cultivation of sympathy and fearlessness which are the keys to that unity.[2] The witnesses to this which the doctrine of evolution brought had no cross-examination at his hands; their evidence supplemented what to him were inborn convictions. There was prevision of Weismann's theory of the continuity of the germ-plasm in his rebuke to a friend who cursed his parents for

[1] *English Review*, March 1913, " George Meredith: Freethinker," by G. W. Foote.

[2] " For Love we Earth, then serve we all;
Her mystic secret then is ours."
The Thrush in February.

begetting him. "They couldn't help it; the blame, if there be any, is yours. You demanded to be, and they had to comply. Thus do foolish people quarrel with Nature—why were they born, when they *were* already in the matrix of the past?"

During his readership at Chapman & Hall's, the earlier novels of both Hardy and Gissing had come before him, and, as will be seen later on, each has testified to the encouraging and, withal, faithful, criticism bestowed on their manuscripts. Meredith had no spark of jealousy of other men's work in his nature, and the neglect and contumely which for long years were his portion and discipline only deepened his sympathy for every member of his craft in whose work the note of sincerity was struck.[1]

Again and again he would say, "When I was young, had there been given me a little sunshine of encouragement, what an impetus to better work would have been mine. I had thoughts, ideas, ravishment, but all fell on a frosty soil; and a little sunshine would have been so helpful to me. So, whenever I can give honest praise, I will not stint it, although I remind those who hunger after it that, if they will be drenched with honey, they must expect the wasps. You heard me warn Gissing against excessive use of dialogue, for this should always be sparingly used, and be more broken by reflective or descriptive passages. Most of the young novelists seem to me not to have read and observed enough: their books lack the allusiveness which is a note of culture, and evidence of character and study." His heart went out to Gissing, as, indeed, to all struggling

[1] To cite one among several examples, his appreciation of Mrs. Clement Shorter's skill in metrical ballads led him generously to add an Introduction to her *Collected Poems*.

authors when their capacity warranted pursuit of a literary career. As for mediocrity, he said, "Let it stick to the pen, if it must, but only in the cash-book and the ledger." Well into manhood he had known, in acute form, the *res angusta domi*, and what asperity there was in his virile temperament had yielded to a mellowing old age with that divine gift of pity "which," as Lord Morley says in his *Diderot*, "one that has it could hardly be willing to barter for the understanding of an Aristotle." When spending a week-end with Gissing, then living at Dorking, we called on Meredith, who on Gissing telling him that he was writing *Veranilda*, said to him—

"You may have histories, but you cannot have novels on periods so long ago. A novel can only reflect successfully the moods of men and women around us, and, after all, in depicting the present we are dealing with the past, because the one is enfolded in the other. I cannot stomach the modern historical novel any more than I can novels which are three-fourths dialect. Thackeray's note was too monotonous; the *Great Hoggarty Diamond*, next to *Vanity Fair*, is most likely to live; it is full of excellent fooling. I met him and Dickens only a very few times. Not much of Dickens will live, because it has so little correspondence to life. He was the incarnation of cockneydom, a caricaturist who aped the moralist; he should have kept to short stories. If his novels are read at all in the future, people will wonder what we saw in them, save some possible element of fun meaningless to them. The world will never let Mr. Pickwick, who to me is full of the lumber of imbecility, share honours with Don Quixote. I never cared for William Black's novels: there is nothing in them but fishing and sunsets. Dear

Besant, good fellow, but since Rice's death unfertilized, for all that was virile in their work came from him. Stevenson described him to me as 'a commercial traveller, with wings.' I agreed, if he would say 'pinions.' George Eliot had the heart of Sappho; but the face, with the long proboscis, the protruding teeth as of the Apocalyptic horse, betrayed animality." What of Lewes? "Oh, he was the son of a clown, he had the legs of his father in his brain."

"I never met Edward FitzGerald: the third line of his quatrains is as the march of a king with his train behind him. I knew Gerald and Maurice, the two sons of his brother John, the fanatical preacher.[1] Maurice and I were great friends when I lived at Esher; he had gifts: he translated the *Crowned Hippolytus* of Euripides. He apparently knew nothing of his uncle's works, and spoke of him to me only as a man with literary friends, Thackeray among them. He told me that when Gerald lay dying at Seaford his father came to see him, and there ensued an altercation as to the place where he should be buried: the father insisting on Boulge, and threatening otherwise not to pay the funeral expenses." This was *apropos* of my quoting Edward FitzGerald's remark, "We are all mad, but I know it."

"I have been re-reading Gibbon with increased appreciation. The subtlety of his remarks on Christianity, and the dexterity of conveying through veiled implication of belief his scepticism, is delightful. The wonder of the book increases when you look at the pudding-face of the author. The man is unique, but

[1] I remember, as a boy, hearing "John the Saint," as his brother Edward called him, preach at an open-air service; he mounted the old capstan which still stands in front of my house. There is a graphic account of him in Wright's *Life of Edward FitzGerald*, Vol. II. p. 67.

he has been in some ways a bad influence on other historians. Macaulay was attracted by his balanced antithesis, which in his hand became metallic and flagellatory. He loved to lay bare the author's bottom and whack him well, as he did Wilson Croker and Robert Montgomery. I dislike Gibbon for his treatment of Mdlle. Curchod, but I should gather from the *Autobiography* and the *History* that he had only an intellectual appreciation of the Priapic energy.[1] By the way, Dame Gossip tells me that Rome is now doubly famous. Gibbon conceived the idea of his *Decline and Fall* when he sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, and Hall Caine conceived the idea of his *Eternal City* when musing amidst the ruins of the Coliseum! But as champion of Christ and of Shakespeare, I think that Miss Corelli will go one better than Hall Caine. The influence of Carlyle on "St. Bernard" was so strong that he wrote his book on the Abbot in grotesque imitation of Carlyle's style, and only on my protest that this would damn it did he re-write it in his own natural style, and an admirable style it was." I reminded Meredith that Morison had dedicated the book to Carlyle, but cancelled this in a subsequent edition, through disgust after reading the *Reminiscences*. "I know from your references to Hobbes' *Leviathan* that you appraise him highly." I said that I was in good company, Huxley and Sir Alfred Lyall being of it. "Yes, but with Hobbes I tread only the pavement, with Schopenhauer I dig in the Earth's bowels."

"Morley has sent me his *Gladstone:* the life of the intellectual gladiator is more to his taste than the life of a soldier-statesman like Cromwell, because Morley

[1] Meredith had not read the *Autobiographies:* i. e. the several drafts published under that title by John Murray, 1896. See pp. 204, 263.

has no stomach for fighting. Hence the difference between him and Carlyle, whose heart was in the story of a battle. Gladstone had not a great mind; he was a great debater, but his scholarship was limited, and his theological opinions of the narrowest. No Homeric authority agreed with his fantastic theories of Christian philosophy latent in the *Iliad*, of, for example, his equations of Athênê and the Logos; and in the famous controversy over the Gadarene pigs Huxley pulverized him. But he wouldn't admit that he was beaten, he was a crafty controversialist." [1]

Meredith was a born tease: the Comic Spirit was unquenchable in him, and not even the discomfort of his victim could check it, till in the mellowness which, in his case, old age happily brought, the tartness vanished. Some years ago, as the result of an operation, he was put for a time on low diet, farinaceous stuff, and the like. One evening, eating only half of the pudding which was his staple (a Barmecide feast in contrast with the fare set before his guests), the maid, in taking away the dish, said: "Oh, if you please, sir, does this puddin' want savin'?" That was enough. Looking at her solemnly, he said, "Now, my good girl, you, I believe, a churchgoer, ask me if this puddin' wants savin'. Do you think that the puddin' has a soul, that it stands in need of salvation, as we are told we all do? Take it away, Elizabeth, and let me never hear you ask such a funny question again." And with trembling hands that boded ill for the safe deposit of the dish, it was carried to the kitchen.

A very old friendship was somewhat strained through

[1] There was a diabolically clever review of a mythical book, *The Elements of Logic*, by W. E. Gladstone, Vols. I to VI, in the *St. James's Gazette*, March 21, 1885.

Meredith circulating among his intimates a roguish legend that the friend in question, an ardent Wagnerian, had played the master's music so bewitchingly in the presence of Frau Wagner that she would not believe that the pianist was other than her husband re-incarnated, and, consequently, so followed him about as to make his life a veritable misery. As a last example of this play of the Comic Spirit, an occasion came through an article of mine, contributed to the *Quarterly Review*, wherein the theory of evolution was pushed to its logical issue in including the religions of the world in its processes. Assuming that the episcopate would smell heresy in the article, Meredith invented the droll sequel which he tells in the following letter—

" Box Hill,
" *November* 1, 1907.

" Dear Sir Reynard,

" While in the hands of the doctor with some fever I had in my head a splendid, partly pathetic, ballad, ' The Hunting of Sir Reynard by the 15 Merry Prelates.'

" They started full of Breakfast-luncheon and confidence, sure of him in whom they had discovered the Arch-disintegrator of their Edifice. They returned, four at midnight, seven next morning, three the day after, and one a week later. This one nearly came to his end. It was the first dodge of the Wily One to lead them to a chalk quarry, down which he went by a way he knew. Our prelate's horse stood with stiffened legs, and the rider was precipitated to the edge of the cliff. He was pulled back by the legs, and rode home with a heart intermittently beating. This looked ominous. But at sight of Sir Reynard cantering easily and jauntily on the road below, irritation spurred the

fourteen to continue the hunt. They were led to a broad, deep ditch swollen from recent rains, and into it four of the prelates plumped and were soused, and so on; very exciting. I wish I could remember the verses. Neighbouring cottages supplied the defeated prelates with beds, stale bread, rank bacon, and the remark, 'Ah, you'll never have *him*.'

"I am still weak, not companionable. The attack was rather sharp, but I had refreshment from the ballad."

The heading to this and other letters to me which are included in his *Letters* skilfully edited by his son, Mr. W. Maxse Meredith, called forth inquiries as to the reason of his bestowing on me that vulpine nickname. The occasion of that bestowal is among the most cherished of memories.

In 1895, when I was President of the Omar Khayyám Club, the Burford Bridge Hotel was chosen as our summer rendezvous. Meredith consented to join us, but only after dinner, as his health compelled the simplest fare, and in consenting, he made me promise that he should not be called on to speak, adding that he had never made a speech in public. He came in, leaning on the arm of Mr. Clement Shorter, who had escorted him from Flint Cottage, and as he passed between the tables, all rose to greet him. Thomas Hardy was on my right, George Gissing on my left, and as for the rest of a company including some other notable names, are these not written in the *Book* of the Club? I could do no less than offer Meredith the right hand of fellowship, and there followed a brace of encomiums from Hardy and Gissing, each telling how judgment on their first novels, Hardy's *Poor Man and*

the Lady, never published, and Gissing's *Workers in the Dawn*, was pronounced, and sage counsel given, by Meredith, when he was reader to Chapman & Hall. Of course Meredith, although not asked to speak, could not sit silent. Laying his hand on my shoulder, he made chaffing allusion to the fox-like trick that I had played him, and delivered a little speech the more rich and heart-deep in that it was unpremeditated. In this matter of nicknames, there was bestowal of a longer, but not titular, appellation *apropos* of my being memoirist of certain friends, among these, Grant Allen and Henry Walter Bates. On a visit to Box Hill I was hailed as "Conductor of the Biographical Bus along the Necrologic Tram," and there followed some chaffing letters in which the importance of not too quickly filling-up the vacant places in the "Bus" was urged. Here is a sample of one of them.

"Think nothing of financial fall in Bus shares when it is known that Kelvin has applied for a seat, and he is advised and well advised. If you can get one Bishop on board, you have him. It is true that you will have to change the road, and the crux for Sir Reynard is financial advantage or conscientious integrity."

Meredith has said so much in his writings, and also through various other channels, about the emancipation of woman and the larger mission of which he has been her apostle, that there is no need here to draw upon notes which could only repeat things familiar. But it may be well to say that the last time I saw him, just three weeks before his death, he emphasized his regret that those whom he desired should win should imperil their cause by repellent tactics. "And then," he added,

" they want the incompatible, Martyrdom with Comfort." He was full of fun and badinage. " It was no longer a hunt by the Merry Prelates; the Vatican had been put on the scent, and the fate of the quarry was sealed." There had been " an invasion of Flint Cottage by Cupid, who, in the guise of a railway guard, had made one of his maids dance off to the sound of his whistle." Then he talked of Swinburne, and the regretted loss of intercourse during late years through their common deafness. " Second to none, not even to Burns, in his mastery of the many-stringed lyre," summed up his estimate of Swinburne's poetry when he heard of his death. " But he became too torrential and blustering for my enjoyment of him. As to the burial service," he said, " you remember what we had to undergo at Cotter Morison's funeral, and Swinburne should have had, as did York Powell, silent interment. Burn me and scatter the ashes where they will, and let there be no Abracadabra of ritual, is my wish about myself."

A month later, at a Memorial Service in Westminster Abbey, there was sung in procession from the nave to the choir a psalm in which the verse " offering of young bullocks on the altar " occurs. What connection that scrap from a barbaric ritual had with the service those who permitted its inclusion may best know; nor less inconsistent was the expression of " hearty thanks " that George Meredith, to whom this fair earth, with its flowers, its children, and its dumb offspring, was dear; and life to the end, however lightly held, aboundingly sweet; had been " delivered out of the miseries of this sinful world."

There were humble mourners outside the Abbey, a hundred miles away. When Meredith was last at

Aldeburgh it was his delight to be wheeled to the ancient quay along which Crabbe had rolled the barrels of salt which were under his father's charge as collector of duties. Of Crabbe, he said, by the way, "it's a pity that his Tales were not written in prose: they would have been more effective." With a bunch of bladder-weed, plucked from the sodden timbers by my skipper Nickolls and held to his nose as if fragrant as the choicest attar, he would watch John, the old ferryman, whom Charon has since rowed across the Styx, plying oars which he averred were dipped twice in the same water. "I am certain," he said, "that there are Nereids under the keel to help the boat across."

Meredith did not forget John and comrades of his in welcome ways. And when he died, John said to me, "I'm right sorry, sir, we shall never see Mr. Maradith agin. But what made me fare[1] that bad was their barnin' of him. I suppose he wanted it." "Well, John, he didn't *want* it, but he wished it to be done." "Well, sir, that makes me fare bad, that du." Others "fare bad," but for different reasons. They will never again quaff the "wine of life" from the rich, rare vintage at Box Hill. But its bouquet will not depart from the palate. And there will remain the compensation of which Callimachus sings in his peerless lament—

"They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead;
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to shed.
I wept when I remembered how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,
A handful of grey ashes laid long ago at rest;
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales awake,
For Death, he taketh all away, but these he cannot take."

[1] Feel (Suffolk prov.).

Photo, Elliott & Fry.] [*To face page* 164.

Love yours, my dear Clark,

George Gissing.

XV

George Gissing (1857–1903)

In a book entitled *The Private Life of Henry Maitland*, the story of Gissing's life has been fully and frankly told by his old college and intimate friend, Mr. Morley Roberts.

For reasons which I cannot divine, and which have puzzled others, Mr. Roberts has altered the names of persons and places and the titles of Gissing's novels with the result of some confusion to readers outside the circle of Gissing's intimates. They will not guess that "Harold Edgewood" is Mr. Frederic Harrison, that by "John Harley" and the *Piccadilly Gazette* are meant John Morley and the *Pall Mall Gazette;* that "John Glass" is the late James Payn; G. H. Rivers, Mr. H. G. Wells; Edward Latter, Mr. Clement Shorter; nor will they easily identify me under the disguise of "Edmund Roden."

I met Gissing at the Rev. Charles Anderson's in 1885. He had then not long started on his career as a novelist. *Workers in the Dawn* was published in 1880; *The Unclassed* in 1884. He was shy; he had a hunted-hare look; he struck me as morbidly self-conscious; all that he had gone through tended to make him that; he joined but little in the talk. Not then knowing his early history, or the fugitive life he was living, I asked him his address. He said, "I haven't one, but let me write to you." Some time passed before we met again;

then, in the intervals, when he was not wandering, we foregathered, and the friendship gradually ripened into fellowship. I love to think of him : I treasure his every letter to me. That they do credit to his head and heart has evidence in the selection which follows.[1] As to his books, in the *Unclassed*, in which the chief character, Osmund Waymark, is himself; in *New Grub Street* and in *Born in Exile*, he tells much of his life-story of storm and suffering. There is a calmer sequel in *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft ;* a book which release from distracting cares permitted him to write in the seclusion of the country at Budleigh Salterton.

In the touches of scholarship which, among other qualities, lift his novels, often sordid as is their theme, above the average, there are seen evidences of preferences which could not have their full satisfaction. Meeting Mr. Frederic Harrison at one of Sir Henry Thompson's " Octaves," he told me that Gissing sent him his first novel, *Workers in the Dawn*. He saw that it came from a cultured pen and this led to his offering Gissing the post of tutor to his sons, which he accepted. Other pupils were secured him by Mr. Harrison's influence and he was making, for him, a fair income. But he was restive; his heart was set on literature and he gave up his job.

During the years that I had the privilege of Gissing's friendship, that which most appealed to me was his craving for sympathy. Early misfortunes had increased a hypersensitiveness which was an unenviable portion of his mental endowment, yet this was in keeping with the joy and eagerness into which he flung himself when,

[1] Permission to make free use of these, as also to include two unpublished poems, has been generously given me by Gissing's brother and executor, Mr. Algernon Gissing.

in the company of his fellows. Such lighter mood comes out in the following lines written by him at a Whitsuntide gathering at Aldeburgh in 1898—

"The *Lotus* on a sunny reach
And friends aboard her, frankly human,
Chatting o'er all that time can teach
Of heaven and earth, of man and woman.

An eddy in the silent flow
Of days and years that bear us—whither
We know not, but 'tis well to know
We spent this sunny day together."

"Siena,
"*November* 6, 1897.

"My Dear Clodd,

"Many thanks to you for your delightful letter. I have read it many times, and shall yet do so. It comes just as I am preparing to depart; for, heaven be thanked, I have finished my little bit of work, and can now drench myself with Italy. It has been rather a tough job, owing to unlucky circumstances. Three weeks ago my landlady's husband died (he having been lying paralysed for a year) and immediately after his funeral we moved to a new flat. Happily, I stuck to my desk through it all—and to-day I have had the pleasure of paying 4*s.* for the transport of the MS. to England.

"Your paper on Farrar's painful book[1] I have, of course, enjoyed. You know there must be a certain amount of dishonesty in such an attitude. As always, your blade twinkles merrily while doing execution. I had a laugh now and then and the thing did me good.

"By the bye, it vexes me that I should not have explained to you in detail my arrangements during the

[1] *The Bible : its Meaning and Supremacy*, by F. W. Farrar.

days before I left England. I left the Normans on Thursday, September 9, and from then till Friday in the week following was overwhelmed with work—packing, etc. On Saturday, September 18, I left Epsom and went north. On Tuesday after I came to London, where I was engaged to spend the evening with Bullen (suddenly) for talking over business; and at eleven next morning I started for the Continent. It annoyed me much that I could not accept your invitation; and no less (when I knew of it) that I had missed Meredith's dinner. The letter from Box Hill never got to me till I was in Italy; and I wrote at once to Meredith explaining my behaviour. I earnestly hope he received the letter.

" Of course I have not been able to see very much of Siena, but this is not my part of Italy. I have, I am sorry to say, very little interest in the Renaissance. On the other hand I shout with joy whenever I am brought very near to the old Romans. Chiefly I am delighted here with the magnificent white oxen, with huge horns, which draw carts about the streets. Oxen and carts are precisely those of Virgil.

" St. Catherine interests me. The other day I saw her head—her actual head, preserved in the church of San Dominico. A ghastly sight—but, of course, impressive.

" At Rome I find I shall not be able to stop. The winter advances, and I am in a great hurry to get into Calabria before much snow falls on the mountains. I stop at Naples, to see, if possible, Marion Crawford, who may be able to give me some useful advice.

" The only safe address for the next few weeks will be : Poste Restante, Napoli. The people there will, I think, forward my letters if I request it with a sufficient quantity of *issimos*.

"Some one sent me the *Chronicle* notice of Tennyson.[1] I gather that the book is not bad, though, as you say, one wishes some one else could have written it. Tennyson is a weak point with me. I have such admiration and love for his work that I loathe to hear such things about the man himself as are constantly being told. If he was *not* in essence a grand creature, well, it makes the world a little more inexplicable and unpleasant.

"Grant Allen's book [2] will, I am sure, be profoundly interesting. Such a man cannot work for years on a subject he has at heart without producing something really good. He told me himself a little about it when we were together at Aldeburgh—a delightful time! And I have ever since looked forward to the publication.

"I am inflicting a very long letter upon you. Take it, I beg, as meaning that your friendship and sympathy are very valuable to me. One happy result of a residence abroad is the strengthening of one's natural ties in the home country.

"With heartiest and kindest remembrances,

"Always yours,

"George Gissing."

"9, Wentworth Terrace, Wakefield,

"*September* 1, 1898.

"My Dear Clodd,

"I chuckled with pleasure on recognizing your hand. Many thanks for letting me know of *Longmans*,[3] I had heard nothing of it, and it is really curious how little I care nowadays to read printed comment on my

[1] *Alfred Tennyson*, A Memoir, by his Son, 1897.

[2] *The Evolution of the Idea of God.*

[3] Andrew Lang's comments on Gissing's *Abridgment of Forster's Life of Dickens* in "The Sign of the Ship."

books. But this kind of thing helps to keep one out of the workhouse, no doubt.

"Thackeray? I suppose Lang suggests a companion volume? Blackies did the same, and I declined; simply because I could not afford to work for six months or more for the very trifling payment they suggested. I should *like* to try my hand at Thackeray, who, be it said between us, appeals to me much more strongly than Dickens. If I ever find myself in anything like a quiet state—mentally and materially—which may come to pass ten years hence, I shall be tempted to prose about W. M. T.

"I have just heard from Keary, from some wild place in France. He writes despondently about his literary prospects, and speaks of a novel of his just to be published by Methuens. It amazes me that a man secure from penury should lament the failure of his work to become popular. But then I am so preoccupied by the accursed struggle for money that nothing metaphysical seems to me of primary importance.

"I look forward to the winter, when there will be a chance of seeing you—at all events, at Frascati's. It is one of my small manias to imagine that friends from whom I have not heard for some time are utterly alienated. I imagine causes of offence, etc.: therefore I am particularly glad to be replying to your cheery note.

"Believe me, my dear Clodd,

"Always yours,

"George Gissing.

"Have you seen Tolstoy's *Qu'est ce que l'art?* Grant Allen has a place in it, among authorities on æsthetics."

"13, Rue de Siam, Passy, Paris,
"*November* 7, 1899.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"I urge no technical plea. My silence has no excuse. Again and again I have wished to write; again and again I have done something else. It is more than kind of you to take the thing so good-humouredly.

"I felt a distinct sense of loss when I suddenly came across the announcement of Grant Allen's death. I liked him; indeed, I liked him very much. I found his talk delightful, and was always sorry that I could not have more of it; there was a great charm for me in his honest, gentle personality—thoroughly honest and gentle, spite of his occasional scoffing at himself or at others. To you the loss must be sad indeed. I am so sorry I cannot see the *Chronicle* nowadays, and so missed what you wrote there. It was, I know, much more to the point than what I chanced to read in the *Athenæum*.

"Yes, yes, I know that moment, when the silence of a grey day makes audible the voices that are still. It comes very often when one has passed the middle point of life. To me, the sadness of it is not unwelcome, for I feel more and more how little wisdom there is in anything but silent thought—and who can think without sadness?

"So you have seen Meredith lately. I had a letter from him about my book,[1] for which, on the whole, he does not greatly care. That by no means surprises me; I feared the thing had small value.

"All the same, I shall send you a copy of it—for my pleasure, not for yours. I await only the arrival of copies from America, for the few English ones I had to dispose of were sent to addresses rigorously indicated by

[1] *The Crown of Life.*

piety or self-interest. Methuen does not advertise this book, I see, and I suppose no novel has much chance just now.

"By the by, Pinker has suggested to me that he should try to get all my books into the hands of some one publisher. I should like this, but I have a doubt whether the time has come yet; there is a curious blending of respect and contempt in the publishers' mind towards me, and I should like to see which sentiment will prevail. If the respect, one ought to be able to make decent terms with a good house; if the contempt, one must relinquish ambitions proved to be idle, and so attain a certain tranquillity—even if it be that of the workhouse. I was always envious of workhouse folk; they are the most independent of all.

"You write from Aldeburgh. I wonder whether you are there for some time, or only for the week-end (as north-country people say). Perhaps I had better address to you there.

"Shorter has written to me, asking for a story for his new *Illustrated Newspaper for the Home.* What an odd title! I suppose he really means a 'newspaper'? I shall do my best, as Shorter was kind in the days when he headed legions; but that legend 'For the Home' troubles me and puts a restraint upon my imagination.

"Naturally, Meredith does not speak to me of his health. I hope no operation impends—the thought of such things makes me wince angrily.

"I hear that your weather is fearful. Here on the other hand there has been a fortnight of mild bright skies. Every afternoon I walk for a couple of hours, generally in the Bois de Boulogne—doing my best to escape death under motor-cars and motor-cycles which

go (without exaggeration) considerably quicker than an ordinary railway train.

" I see interesting books in the new lists, and wish I could get hold of them. If, in the end, all goes well with me (a great *if*) I shall pass my days in a garden, or by the fireside, merely reading. Now and then I have such a hunger for books that I loathe the work which forbids me to fall upon them.

" In the summer I saw something of Switzerland, and spent the last week or two of holiday by the Lago Maggiore. But I notice with misgiving that I cannot find the same delight in travel as of old. My sensibilities are duller.

" All good things be with you ! And believe me, my dear Clodd,

" Ever sincerely yours,

" George Gissing."

" 13, Rue de Siam, Paris,
" *May* 6, 1900.

" My dear Clodd,

" On getting back to Paris I had a violent attack of intercostal rheumatism, which even kept me in bed for a couple of days. Now I am able to enjoy the brilliant weather and to think about a little story I have to write before leaving town for the summer. Our departure is fixed for the 25th of this month, and we go to St. Honoré (Nièvre) in the centre of France, where we have taken the *Villa des Roses* until the end of October. This will be easier, as regards journey, than going to the Alps : the distance is only six hours from Paris. The villa is roomy and comfortable : I hope to work there very steadily all through the months of sunshine. If I find any time for rambling, near at

hand is the interesting old town of Autun and the sight of the Gallic Bibracte.

"If my holiday was a time of rest and pleasure, I owe that very greatly to you: your house remains with me as a memory of delightful tranquillity. I am bidden, moreover, to thank you very heartily for the really splendid collection of autographs you enabled me to bring back to my wife. If fate is decent to us all, some day you will look through the autograph-albums of which I spoke to you, and there will be shouting of joy!

"Your articles on Herbert Spencer were read with interest and appreciation, as everything else of yours will be which I am able to put into Gabrielle's hands.

"I wish you could have been with us last night. We were at a concert given by Delaborde, one of the finest of living pianists. I, who am no friend of public entertainments, came back glad in heart and mind.

"Of course I shall write to you in the course of the summer; perhaps I shall have news about my luckless books, which Pinker is trying to get all together into the hands of Smith, Elder.

"I miss your talk: I miss it seriously. For you are one of only two or three people I know whose talk often goes below the surface of things—who are capable of intellectual wonder—who do not confuse reason with materialism—who (rarest thing, perhaps, of all) know how to joke in earnest.

"Believe always that to us here you are a friend whom we feel it impossible to overvalue.

"Ever sincerely yours,

"George Gissing."

"Villa des Roses, St. Honoré-les-Bains, Nièvre, France,
"*June* 7, 1900.

"My dear Clodd,

"I ought to have thanked you before this for the little volume on the *Alphabet*. Getting into order here and forcing myself to think about a book which must be written this summer, has taken all my time. But at last things are in train, and I can have the pleasure of writing to you once more.

"From your *Story of the Alphabet* I have learnt much. Your space was very restricted; I felt here and there that you would have liked more elbow room. But I am sure it is a good, useful little book, and once more you have come as a helper to those who want to know something of a subject, but have no time to investigate. How you yourself find time to investigate, heaven knows! These are mysteries which one must be content to accept with mere emotion of gratitude.

"Next came your long kind letter—a true delight to me. How very good of you to have kept in mind my old garden tent! Why, it seems to me as if that tent were part of some prior existence, out of which I have long passed. Straining my memory, I recall that I succeeded in selling the thing, together with some furniture, before I left Dorking. But thank you much for the suggestion about it.

As for the rattan, no, do not trouble to send it. Here I use a sturdy stick of Scotch gorse, and the cane would seem effeminate. Let it lie in your house till I see you again.

"Yesterday arrived *Grant Allen*,[1] which I read straight away. How interesting is a man's life! And how well you have presented this particular span of

[1] *Grant Allen: A Memoir*, by Edward Clodd.

busy years! The writing is in your best manner; so clear, so sympathetic of him, so pleasantly touched with humour. Discretion rules from beginning to end. I should say that you have done the greatest possible service to Allen's memory to divest his personality of the temporary, the unessential—and to show the core of the man, his potent virtues, his amiable characteristics, his persistent aims. There is not a superfluity in the volume; the selection of illustrative letters, etc., is skilful, no reader but will wish the book were longer; no one who knows Grant Allen but will close it with a sense of satisfaction in your treatment of him.

"You know that I had a very strong liking for the man; a great admiration of his powers. After reading your memoir, I feel both liking and admiration increased.

"How excellent those two letters of his to parsons! He was a force, or, at all events, a steady influence—on the side of civilization, and his ideas will not perish with him. Your pages 199–200 rejoice me. This is timely speech and it, too, will not miss its mark.

"Thank you for all the pleasure you have given me. I enjoy my quiet life here all the more for such voices from the far home. St. Honoré is a most beautiful place; a hilly country beautifully wooded—some of the finest oaks and chestnuts I ever saw, making woodland glades of unutterable delight in the summer-time. Here the acacia is indigenous, and at this moment it makes the countryside a mass of odorous blossom. After sunset a peculiar feature is given to the place by certain sounds strange to England—the ceaseless shrilling of crickets, the clamour of frogs, and the queer hooting of toads. Did you ever hear that?

"There are sulphur baths here (a casino, etc.), but as

yet visitors have not begun to arrive. Happily our house is remote from the bathers' quarter. We have a beautiful garden of fruit, vegetables and flowers.

"The invitation with which your letter ends is a joy to me as often as I think of it. I wonder whether I shall ever again have such a delightful time as I enjoyed lately at your house? One must not expect too much of fate. But I assure myself that the house is *there* and you in it. Had you, after all, good weather at Aldeburgh? I heartily hope so.

"With kind remembrances to you all,

"Ever sincerely yours,

"GEORGE GISSING."

"Villa Souvenir, Arcachon, Gironde, France,
"*January* 8, 1902.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"A letter written on the very verge of the New Year I take as a peculiar kindness. The prompting to come at such a moment does not come unless there is an often-present sense of good-will; and the thought of this, here in the distance, warms my heart.

"I look forward with eagerness to your Huxley volume. It will be written, I know, with love and reverence; all your best qualities as man of science and man of letters will be in it. As I think I have said before, you have points of strong likeness to Huxley. No one, I suspect, can speak of him with a more genial authority.

"A month ago I had a kind letter from Meredith; of course he spoke not of himself. Is it true (as I was amazed to read in an English newspaper) that he is writing his autobiography, and having it revised by

John Morley? After all, such things ought not to surprise one; the life-long hidden artist, being a man of somewhat aggressive personality, might well think of uttering himself *in propriâ personâ* before the last silence fell upon him.

"I envy you your proposed course of historical reading. My Roman novel, alas, is suspended by the state of my health; a little also—I admit—by the reflection that so many people have of late written novels about Rome. My task during the last month or two has been an abridged and generally edited edition of Forster's Dickens: I can't help thinking that the little volume will be readable enough. An odd thing (not a novel) called *An Author at Grass*, which I have taken two years to write—at intervals—will begin to appear serially in the *Fortnightly*. I shall be disappointed if you do not like it. For it is written for people like you, whom the general uproar of things does not deafen to still small voices.

"You speak of my wife. Oh, yes, she is still with me; and, I devoutly hope, will be until I can no longer benefit by human solace. Our marriage begins to be an old story, and to tell you the truth—I often forget that there is anything exceptional about it. So many people in France and in England know her and like her and speak freely of her that I no longer make any mystery of the matter. It has been justified by the event and with quietness and indifference to past troubles. I shall not be satisfied until she has made your acquaintance; but one cannot say when I shall be again in England. Meanwhile she knows you as a trusty friend of mine and holds you in esteem.

"Arcachon is doing me good. I breathe more easily and am altogether more vigorous. Sleep does not yet

visit me regularly enough, but I hope for that. All good be with you in the New Year.

"Believe me to be,

"Always sincerely yours,

"GEORGE GISSING."

"Villa Souvenir, Arcachon, Gironde, France,

"*March* 1, 1902.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"I have to thank you for a long, kind letter and for a delightful book.[1] Let me speak of the book first.

"It is as I knew it would be; you have written *con amore*—which is saying a great deal—in language worthy of the subject. Do you not know that common kind of book in which extracts from the writer treated of shine with painful contrast amid the author's text? Here is no such distressing inequality. You tell me of difficulties in the composition: no one could perceive that you had not written the book at perfect ease and leisure. Nowhere do I find any trace of haste or fatigue. Excellent is the arrangement; admirable the choice of illustrative quotations; the outcome of it all, a clear and living picture of this great-brained and high-souled man. I lay down the book with profound admiration of Huxley—that reasoned admiration that it is your purpose to move and justify. More than once, be assured, shall I return to this volume of yours; for it seems an epoch in the intellectual and social history of England. I could quote several passages for which I especially thank you. Let me mention one on p. 195. 'The chains of custom,' etc. Very true and all the more necessary to be plainly put, because its very

[1] *Thomas Henry Huxley*, by Edward Clodd.

obviousness prevents the facts from being perceived by hosts of people.

"What a fine fellow he was! I have just been reading in *The Spectator* a notice of Kidd's new book, where I find that Huxley is spoken of as a retrograde force, as one who misinterpreted and spoilt the message of Darwin. This, I fancy, is rubbish. It is all very well for the sun to be shining in heaven, but what if a lot of pestilent chimneys vomit so much smoke that you walk about gasping in gloom? Some one must *have at* the folk who so befoul the atmosphere and make them consume their evil vapours. Huxley was a great 'cloud-compeller.' He did, to a wonderful extent, let in the light. And let us be grateful that such a man standing in the name of science, stood no less in that of literature. It is this remarkable combination of powers which makes his work so entirely beneficent. The plainest of plain men can read him with instruction; the finest of lettered folk can read him with delight. Assuredly these many volumes of his are among the best things bequeathed to the future by our good old nineteenth century.

"And now your letter. Oddly enough, I have just been writing to Wells with very much the same criticism of his work that you suggest. I have asked him: What do you mean exactly by your 'God' and your 'purpose'? I rather suspect that he means nothing more definite than that reverential hopefulness which is natural to every thoughtful and gentle-hearted man. In his lecture to the Royal Institution, he goes, I think, entirely too far, talking about eternal activity of the spirit of man, and defying the threats of material outlook. Well, well, let us agree that it is very good to acknowledge a great mystery; infinitely better than to

use the astounding phrase of Berthelot, '*Le monde n'a plus de mystère.*' How to go further than this recognition I know not. That there is *some order, some purpose,* seems a certainty; my mind, at all events, refuses to grasp an idea of a Universe which means nothing at all. But just as unable am I to accept any of the solutions ever proposed. Above all it is the existence of natural beauty which haunts my thought. I can, for a time, forget the world's horrors; I can never forget the flower by the wayside and the sun falling in the west. These things have a meaning—but I doubt, I doubt—whether the mind of man will ever be permitted to know it.

"Glover's book on the fourth century [1] is known to me only through reviews. I must get hold of it some day. Dill's book is the last I read before saying goodbye to dear old Dorking, nearly three years ago. Unfortunately both come a little before the time which specially interests me—the age of Cassiodorus.

"How I wish I could be with you when you go to Box Hill! I had a line from Meredith three months ago, so wrote him some account of myself—as he wished it. Pray speak a fitting word to him from me when you have the chance.

"By the by, it was a perfectly sober paragraph in the *Daily News* which told of Meredith's Autobiography. I marvel that you have not heard it spoken of.

My *Author at Grass* [2] is perhaps a little more serious in intention than the title would suggest. I have tried to put into it a good deal of what I really feel in these latter days about things in general, that is to say. But the *Fortnightly* will begin the publication of it in

[1] *Life and Letters in the Fourth Century,* by T. R. Glover.

[2] Published in book form under the title of *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft.*

April or May, and possibly it may fall under your eyes.

"Spring has begun here: it is warm and bright and the pine forest is loud with birds. As far as I can see, wisdom dictates a residence for some time to come here in the south-west of France. The climate may very likely set me on my legs again. Arcachon itself is not quite the place; so am thinking of Cambo on the slope of the Pyrenees, just beyond Bayonne. There is very good communication with England, and the summer is excessively hot. As I have had to look death in the face, I must not grumble about this expatriation, if indeed it helps me to live and work for a few years more. My friends, I trust, will not forget me, and there is always the hope of a last home in England.

"Ever, my dear Clodd,

"Sincerely yours,

"GEORGE GISSING."

"Villa Lannes, Ciboure, St. Jean de Luz, France,

"*July* 6, 1902.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"Your very kind answer to my enquiry has put our minds at rest. Things remain as they were, and I am glad of it.

"Well, here we are established for at least a twelvemonth, address as above. I hope we shall not suffer too much from the summer heat, but for a month or two I shall probably have a little difficulty in working, the temperature of the French and Spanish frontier is not that of Aldeburgh—where I hope you will enjoy many a breezy Sunday before the bright weather ends.

"Last night I saw a ceremony which would have

greatly interested you—the lighting of the fire of St. John.[1] For some reason, the fête has been postponed, this year for a week or two, and yesterday was the Eve. Before the main portal of the church, in a narrow street of old and very picturesque houses, a great bonfire was built up—faggots set about the trunk of a considerable tree, which stood there with all its leaves on top growing. At nine o'clock in the evening, amid the crowded population, a band of music came up, preceded by Chinese lanterns and half-a-dozen flaring flambeaux. Then from the church issued all the clergy of St. Jean de Luz, and the curé, to the sound of canticles, solemnly ignited the pile, which blazed gloriously. I never saw a rite more obviously primitive; it impressed me strongly. Whilst the fire was blazing, the clergy went back into the church and there sang a Te Deum.

"Would not good old Grant Allen have enjoyed seeing this. But perhaps he *did* see it, here or elsewhere, during his wanderings.

"I am sure you will believe me when I say that, glad as I am to have a letter from you, I abhor the thought of adding to your work by exacting one. Let me feel that you write *only* when there comes a moment of genuine leisure. Horrible that you should be at the bank till eleven at night! Don't let that go on much longer; stand firm for your right of retirement. It is all very well for amiable directors to bind you with compliment—but they cannot add one day to your life. I shall rejoice—quite sincerely rejoice—when I hear that, like Lamb, you have gone home for ever. No man can make a better use of tranquillity than you.

[1] On fire festivals, see Frazer's *Golden Bough*, III., Ch. IV, sect. 2 (2nd edition).

"There was a prætorian prefect under Hadrian, a fine old fellow called Similis. Permitted at length to lay down office, he retired to his country estate, where he died seven years later. On his tomb he had graven: 'Here lies Similis, who existed for sixty-four years, and *lived seven*.'

"All good be with you,

"Ever yours,

"GEORGE GISSING."

"Villa Lannes, Ciboure, St. Jean de Luz, France,

"*November* 30, 1902.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"Your long letter was, if possible, more than usually welcome, for a cloudy and rainy autumn has kept me rather down in spirits, and the sense of not getting much 'forrader' either in work or in health sometimes makes me groan at this long exile. The truth is, however, that I might be vastly worse off in every respect, and don't think I am going to write you a chapter of lamentations—which would be a detestable return for all your good things.

"So you have been to Tyrol. I know nothing of that country, save what may be seen from the railway, on the way over the Brenner from Italy to Germany; but there remains with me a picture of sunrise striking on the snowy cold mountain-tops and turning it to rosy glow. When you were on the Garda Lake, you do not seem to have gone to Sirmione, where I believe some remains are to be seen of Catullus's villa. At all events, he did live there, and there wrote one at least of his loveliest poems, and I grieve that I was never able to see the spot. Yes, yes, I know that colour of the beeches in North Italy. Yet I think I have seen a

glory not inferior in the woods of Cotswold—a neglected part of England which would rejoice your soul at the right moment.

"Let me mention another Basque custom (after the St. John fires) which may perhaps interest you. When the head of a family dies here, at a country house, the bees' hives are at once covered with crape; they say that if this were neglected, the bees would all go away. Talking of this to an English lady, I learnt from her that, some twenty years ago, she found exactly the same practice and superstition in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Did you ever hear of it?

"I am glad to hear of your reading. For my own part, all my leisure of the last six months has been given to Spanish. It has always been one of my ambitions to read Don Quixote in the original, and now, by the grace of heaven, I am able to do so—indeed, I draw towards the end of this glorious book. The translations give one but a maimed idea of Cervantes. For one thing, they (or nearly all) omit a good deal of matter deemed untranslatable; and then, only the Elizabethan Shelton came anything near a worthy rendering of the style. Oh, it is a noble work! It has done me solid good—even physical good, I believe, by way of mental animation.

"And presently I am going to make an invasion into modern Spanish fiction; for they tell me that a few good novels exist, especially those of Perez Galdos.

"A recent acquaintance I have made here is that of Butler Clarke, an Oxford Don who passes most of the year at St. Jean de Luz. Do you know him? His special work is at Spanish—he has published a history of Spanish literature, and sundry editions of Spanish books. A pleasant man, and lives very much as a recluse

while here, dreading the ordinary English who come over here to golf. Then, we have for neighbour Stuart-Menteath, the geologist, probably known to you by name. Another sort of man, he; very cantankerously bitter against all men of science, sore because of his own failure to become prominent in the English scientific world. Yet I imagine that his attainments are considerable.

"Have you read the volume Joseph Conrad has just published, *Youth and two other Stories?* One of the three stories I have read in *Blackwood*, and it is a most admirable piece of work. I rejoice to see a very well written article on Conrad in this week's *Spectator*. No man at present writing fiction has such a grip at reality, such imaginative vigour, and such wonderful command of language, as Joseph Conrad. I think him a *great* writer—there's no other word. And, when one considers his personal history, the English of his books is something like a miracle. Do, do read the new volume, if you have not yet done so, and, if you agree with me, talk about it to every man or woman capable of understanding good things.

"Excellent, your batch of stories, and all new to me. We chuckled much over them.

"Your hard winter's work has begun: may all go well with you through these dark and stern winter months. The great success of these cheap editions must be very cheering to you.

"My wife thanks you for your kind message to her, and sends her very kind regards. 'I hope I shall some day know Mr. Clodd,' is always her comment when we speak of you.

"Ever cordially yours,

"George Gissing."

"Ispoure, St. Jean Pied-de-Port, Basses Pyrenees, France,
"*June* 16, 1903.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"It is now just a year since I came to the Basque country, and I cannot remember in all my life a year so unprofitable. All the time I have been ailing and barely capable of any exertion. In some degree, I fear, the climate may be chargeable with this; it has done good to my lungs, but has reduced my vitality. We are now on the point of going for the summer to the place named above; that, after July 1st will be my address. It is in the mountains, some thirty miles inland, not very high, but sufficiently so to make a good change from this seaboard climate. Well, I shall see how I get on there. The future is full of difficulties. To get one's breathing apparatus into better order is obviously a good thing, and, so long as I improve in this respect, I hesitate to return to the north. On the other hand, my inability to work is becoming a most serious matter. It will amuse you to learn that all the noise about *Ryecroft* has hitherto resulted in a total sale which means, to me, *not quite* £200![1] There is literary success for you! Yet I have nearly three score letters from strangers about this book, most of them enthusiastic. The fact of the matter is that some men are born not to make money. I do not touch the 'great public,' and I suppose never shall. Well, as you know, I don't complain of this; what right have I to complain? But the practical issue grows very serious.

"I have decided to write my sixth-century story. For the moment I turn with disgust from modern life,

[1] While these sheets are passing through the Press, there comes a bookseller's catalogue offering the MS. of Gissing's *The Emancipated* as a bargain at £120! I question if he made half the sum on the book itself.

whereas those old times call to me with a very pleasant voice. If I have anything like decent health at St. Jean Pied-de-Port (which, by the bye, is quite near to Roncesvalles) I must get this book done. I think I can make it fairly good, for I have saturated myself with the spirit of that age. It ought to be infinitely picturesque.

"Extraordinary weather here for the last three weeks: all but ceaseless rain from a lowering sky, and the temperature that of southern winter. This does not improve one's spirits, of course. I wonder whether you are better off in England. We are going, I suppose, through the familiar cycle of bad summers; this is the third in succession.

"I see that Dent is just issuing in the Temple Classics a translation of Augustine's *City of God*. Did you ever read that book? To me, one of the most interesting in all literature. No man ever had such an occasion for moralizing as that offered by the fall of Rome before Alaric. But—*who* buys and reads such books as this? How on earth can it pay Dent to publish them?

"Oh, the delightful story in your last letter about 'these Lears'! There is the representative of the theatre public.[1]

"I received this morning a letter about *Ryecroft* from one R. W. Goulding, who, to my surprise, dates from

[1] The "story" was of two ladies who sat in neighbouring boxes at the Lyceum Theatre, when Irving was acting in *King Lear*. When the curtain fell at end of Act III, one lady, reaching forward to speak to her friend, said, with a yawn, "What a very disagreeable family these Lears must have been to live with."

Analogous to this is the comment of a lady to her friend when the curtain fell at the end of the last scene in the play when Signora Duse took the part of Cleopatra. "What a contrast to the Court of our late beloved Queen!"—E. C.

Welbeck Abbey. I had a vague idea that Welbeck Abbey belonged to some ducal house—Bedford, perhaps? Do you by any chance know of this same Goulding?

"Are you not angered by the course of the Carlyle controversy? This, I think, is decidedly going too far. One has suspected such secrets, but why the 'many-headed beast' should be allowed to gloat upon them, I cannot understand. The affair is grossly indecent, in every sense of the word. In the case of such a man as Carlyle, it is inevitable that the external facts of his domestic life should be written about, but no one has any business to go beneath the surface in such a matter. Sufficient to know that his marriage was, like most marriages, half a blessing and half a burden. His wife's view on the matter has absolutely no relevance for the public.

"Note, then, I beg you, my new address, from July 1st; till then I am at Ciboure. I wonder where you take your holiday this summer. Is your house by the seaside quite finished? Don't, don't speak of my coming there! I fear I shall not live to do so, and the mere thought of eating an English potato at your table makes me frantic with homesickness.

"My wife is well, and, as always, desires to be imaginatively remembered to you.

"Ever yours, my dear Clodd,

"GEORGE GISSING."

"Ispoure, St. Jean Pied-de-Port, B. P., France,
"*October* 17, 1903.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"Your holiday is over, and I hope it makes a pleasant memory. I am drawn every day, in spirit, to that other side of Europe. Here I cannot feel myself

at home; the country has no true charm for me; I want to feel the Mediterranean somewhere near. But the fact is that I have greatly improved in health, and it would not be wise to move while I profit so much by the Basque air. Next summer, if all goes well, I shall take a month or two in England, and then we must have a talk.

"Hearty thanks for the photographs of your seaside house; I am glad to have them. Book-shelves in the hall are delightfully suggestive of an overflow of all good things. It must be a great satisfaction to you to sit down under that ancestral roof, and feel that you have renewed its strength, and that beneath it is peace for you to the end of days. The one thing I greatly envy any man is the possession of a house. I never had one since I was a boy, and now, I fear, never shall.

"So you got Hardy to Aldeburgh at Whitsuntide. After a silence of years, I wrote to him not long ago and have had a pleasant reply. He has evidently ceased to write fiction. Odd this turning to verse late in life; but I suppose he wrote much of it when he was young and the golden years call to him.

"During the summer my wife and I had a few days in Spain. We went over the pass to Roncesvalles, and thence to Pamplona. A wonderful difference between the two sides of the Pyrenees—here warm, green, watered valleys; there a rolling plateau, burnt in summer and in winter deadly cold, without a stream, almost without a tree. It was very Spain the moment one had descended from the mountains. Roncesvalles, with its great monastery set amid woods and meadows on the mountain-top, would be a flawless bit of the middle ages, had not the scoundrel monks recently taken away their roof of red tiles, and replaced it with one of zinc—

an unspeakable horror, ruin to the landscape. There we saw the maces of Roland and of Oliver, and the slippers of Archbishop Turpin, with many another relic more trustworthy. I sat for an hour in the old library, gazing at giant folios of Fathers and Schoolmen, and wished I could have had a year of peace there, to read what I would.

" Well, I am getting on with my book. I am now well past the middle of *Veranilda*, and hope (with trembling) that I may finish by the end of the year. I don't think it will be bad; at all events, it gives me a certain pleasure in writing. But it is harder work than any I ever did—not a line that does not ask sweat of the brain.

" All good be with you. If you have time, look out for Roberts's new book, *Rachel Marr*. I have read it in an advance copy, and, upon my word, it is very strong—far and away the best thing he has ever done; in fact, *the* thing he has been endeavouring all his life.

" Ever yours,

" George Gissing."

In most of the " appreciations " of Gissing, which have appeared at intervals, undue prominence to his portrayal of the seamy and squalid side of things has obscured what had more abiding attraction for him than the slums of New Cut and Whitechapel. As the foregoing letters show, he loved to follow along the lines of the old civilizations. Their art, letters and, what includes both, their life, fascinated him : Homer, Virgil, Horace and Tibullus were among his well-thumbed books. He cared little for Plato or for any speculative writers; Aristotle awoke in him only a languid interest; but as for the *Anabasis*, he took Xenophon to his heart,

for did he not, as he says in *Henry Ryecroft*, "create the historical romance." He was more at home in Rome and Athens than in Chicago, and never came more joyful fulfilment of desire than when he was able to pass beneath the arch of Titus and, later on, roam through Magna Graecia with the letters of Cassiodorus for company.

THE HUMBLE ASPIRATIONS OF G. G., NOVELIST

"*Hoc erat in votis*"

"O could I encounter a Gillman,[1]
Who would board me and lodge me for aye,
With what intellectual skill, man,
My life should be frittered away!

What visions of study methodic
My leisurely hours would beguile!—
I would potter with details prosodic,
I would ponder perfections of style.

I would joke in a vein pessimistic
At all the disasters of earth;
I would trifle with schemes socialistic
And turn over Malthus for mirth.

From the quiddities quaint of Quintilian
I would flit to the latest critiques;
I would visit the London Pavilion,
And magnify lion-comiques.

With the grim ghastly gaze of a Gorgon
I would cut Andersonian bores.
I would follow the ambulant organ
That jingles at publican's doors.

In the odorous alleys of Wapping
I would saunter on evenings serene;
When the dews of the Sabbath were dropping
You would find me on Clerkenwell Green.

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[1]. The later years of Coleridge's life were spent under the hospitable roof of Mr. Gillman at Highgate.

At the Hall Scientific of Bradlaugh
I would revel in atheist rant,
Or enjoy an attack on some bad laws
By the notable Mrs. Besant.

I would never omit an oration
Of Cunninghame Graham or Burns;
And the Army miscalled of Salvation
Should finish my frolic by turns.

Perchance I would muse o'er a mystic;
Perchance I would booze at a bar;
And when in a mind journalistic
I would read the *Pall Mall* and the *Star*.

Never more would I toil with my quill, man,
Or plead for the publisher's pay.
O where and O where is the Gillman,
Who will lodge me and board me for aye?"

Hope in Vain

"Mine, O love, you were mine for an hour,
You and the world for an hour were mine;
For the world with its beauty and joy and power
Lay here, flung at my feet as dower,
In the hour when life had grown divine,
And you, O love, were mine, all mine.

Flowers of face and fire of soul,
Breath of your life for an hour was mine;
And the god of gods in whose control
Is the lightning flash and the thunder's roll
Knew never a joy that was more divine
Than mine in the hour when I call'd you mine.

Honey of lips and the bosom's beat,
And the warm, soft arms for an hour were mine,
And the eager pulse of hastening feet
Whose echoes the words of love repeat,
And the sweet, low voice, and the eyes' star-shine,
All of them, all, for an hour were mine.

All that the years to come could show
Throng'd in the hour when you were mine:
Rapture of meeting, and parting's woe,
Tears, and passion's sunset glow,—
Till I drank the wine of a death divine
From the lips whose kisses were mine, all mine.

Alas, alas, that it all was a dream,
Only a dream that you were mine!
And that one hour with its golden gleam,
Floated past, like a rose on the stream,
Tells me that never an hour shall shine,
Never for ever, to make you mine."

G. G.
Hastings, July 25, 1883.

"I am," he says, "in a great hurry to get into Calabria before much snow falls on the mountains." Arrived there, he sent me this little picture: "What say you to a greeting from Cotrone? The town is on the site of the old Acropolis; indeed there has been a town here since Pelasgian days. To the south the long Lucinian promontory with one last column (twenty-six feet high, visible from afar like a lighthouse) of the great temple of Hera. Three hundred years ago an ecclesiastical scoundrel demolished the temple to build his disgusting Palazzo here. Strange to be walking on the shore of a ghostly region."

This tempts to quotation of the touching words which close his delightful *By the Ionian Sea.*

"Alone and quiet I hear the washing of the waves; I saw the evening fall on cloud-wreathed Etna, the twinkling lights come forth from Scylla and Charybdis; and, as I looked my last towards the Ionian Sea, I wished it were mine to wander endlessly amid the silence of the ancient world, to-day and all its sounds forgotten."

Let me say for myself and, perchance, for others who knew him in equal intimacy, that there is pleasure in turning from *Born in Exile* and *New Grub Street* (which to him had meant *No* Grub Street) to thought of those

serener days when he gave us *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* and to *Veranilda*, his historical romance of the sixth century, the writing of which gave him utmost pleasure. And there is gladness in the reflection that, after storm-tossed years, with their carking cares, there came a season, all too brief, when the weary soul could rest beside green pastures and still waters.

One lie about him should be nailed to the counter. The ecclesiastical soul-snatchers, on the news of Gissing's death, spread a report that he had passed away in " the fear of God's Holy Name and with the comfort and strength of the Catholic Faith " (*Church Times*, January 9, 1904). The falsehood was based on the fact that his devoted Gabrielle, thinking that he would be glad to see an English face, asked the chaplain of St. Jean de Luz to call on him. But he was already in the " hour and article of death," and only able to shake the chaplain by the hand. Could he have chosen what words should be read at such a time, these would not have been from the " Prayer for the Visitation of the Sick " in the Prayer Book, with its catechism as to a dying man's belief. Like Mr. Lawrence in the *New Republic*, more probably, he would have asked for some passages from the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

XVI

William Holman-Hunt (1827–1910)

My relative, Sir Robert Pearce (M.P. for the Leek Division of Staffordshire), took me in July 1880 to his friend, the late Robert Hannah, for a game of bowls and supper to follow. There, to my pleased surprise, I met Holman-Hunt. Hannah had given promise of excellence as a portrait painter, but marriage to a rich woman had the sorry result of his abandonment of art, and what little energy was left him was wasted mainly in investigation into spiritualism and in séances at home. He remained only an acquaintance.

When I was invited by Holman-Hunt to his house in Warwick Gardens, talk fell on his early days and struggles, and he told me the story given in his *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, that, when an office boy, he drew a portrait of an old Jewish fruit-seller well known in the City as "Hannah." "Why," I said to him, "when I was a youth of sixteen, some years after you had left clerking for art, old Hannah was still carrying her basket about Aldermanbury and I often used to sneak off my stool to buy from her apples and penny screws of almonds and raisins." He heard this with amused surprise: it created a bond between us: it awoke a grateful feeling towards the old Jewess who, all unwittingly, formed a link in a friendship that was my possession for thirty years.

With a rare frankness, which was one of many attrac-

tive qualities endearing him to his friends, Holman-Hunt has in the above-named book told the story of his life, and of the movement to which he gave the foremost impulse. He was ever a fighter, yet none the less an incarnation of patience. I shall not forget his indignation when on a visit to Oxford he found that the authorities of Keble College, to whom " The Light of the World " had been bequeathed by the widow of Thomas Combe, its original purchaser, had shifted the picture into a perilous place near some hot-water pipes, had altered the motto, and were charging the public sixpence to see it. He at once set to work to paint a replica which, after being exhibited round the colonies, was given by its owner, Mr. Charles Booth, to the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's Cathedral. It hangs in the southern aisle.

Apropos of the original " Light of the World," the subjoined letter deals with the central figure, supplying details which are not given in *Pre-Raphaelitism*—

" Draycott Lodge, Fulham,
" *January* 11, 1898.

" My dear Clodd,

" I have been shut up in my bedroom for the last eight days with an attack of bronchial asthma, which came upon me very suddenly. I am not yet released, but I am able to write a few lines to a good friend.

" Your marked copy of the *Chronicle* came in due course. What Mr. Bell says about Miss Christina Rossetti sitting for the head in the ' Light of the World ' (after what you know of my having used a cast from a clay model made by me, with a variety of male sitters, my father, Millais, John Capper and, in person, furtively

from Carlyle, also from many departed heroes in effigy—the best I could get serving as my models for different parts of the head), would naturally raise a question in your mind, but what he states is true, because I felt that I had secured the male character in the head. As I had to have some living being for the colour of the flesh—with growth of eyebrows and eyelashes, the solemn expression, when the face was quiescent, of Miss Rossetti promised to help me with some shade of earnestness I aimed at getting, and so I felt grateful to Mrs. R. and herself when they promised to come to Chelsea one morning. I had only one sitting, and spite of my general plan then of relying upon one painting for my final effect, I did later-on touch on the head from a variety of men, one political refugee from Paris lodging above me, for his beard, being among the number. When Mr. Bell came to pump me I was glad to be able to appear interested enough in the sepulchral poetess to remember the fact of her sitting; for the whole idea of poetry and religion which she represents, and also, which Gabriel is so adored for, seems like a nightmare in English thought. . . .

" Yours affectionately,

" W. Holman-Hunt."

The letters which follow at the end explain themselves. That under date June 10, 1888, is a defence of the symbolism with which nearly all Holman-Hunt's pictures are charged. (" Art is not a rebus," said Mr. Frederic Harrison to me, at one of Sir Henry Thompson's " Octaves.") I possess a photogravure of his " Strayed Sheep," a gift from him, and when praising the beauty of the drawing of the sheep, especially of those tangled in briars, he said to me, " But does not

this suggest to you what was in my mind?" As it didn't, he quoted the text, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold." I was deeply interested in watching the progress from start to finish of the "Miracle of the Holy Fire in the Church of the Sepulchre at Jerusalem."[1] In that case the symbolism which appealed to me had not, I gathered, been intended by him. To see in that church, within whose walls one might expect all sweet and gentle influences to rule, the jostling crowd of sects "that profess and call themselves Christians" kept from flying at one another's throats by the muskets of the Mohammedan soldiers—"*Ça donne furieusement à penser.*"

While on the subject of his pictures, some may remember that on the exhibition of his latest work, "The Lady of Shalott," a rumour that the larger part of it was painted by another hand had credence. Having seen it from its outline on the canvas and at frequent intervals during its progress, I can affirm that all the essential part of the picture was his work, and that only in the later stages, when near its completion, did his blindness compel him to call in the help of an artist-friend. Never a murmur escaped his lips when he could no longer see to paint. He said to me, "I have no reason to grumble, when for more than eighty years my eyes have served me well."

Much has been said by critics on Holman-Hunt's over-elaboration of his work, and this has some foundation. With his usual candour he inserted in his book the comment of a Mr. Lee, head of a popular art school in London, who said, "Holman-Hunt is so superlatively conscientious that were he painting a picture in which

[1] A detailed description of the church and ceremony is given in an appendix to *Pre-Raphaelitism*, Vol. II. pp. 421–432.

Everton toffee had to be introduced he would not be satisfied unless he went to Everton to paint it." Upon this, he wrote in his book, "Such comments were harmlessly amusing." As with his work, so with his talk. Everything was related in minutest detail, poured forth from a phenomenal memory, suggesting the story of the Irish sailor who, hauling-in what seemed an interminable rope, said, "Sure they've cut off the end of it."

One Whitsuntide he told the story of a pretty girl of humble class whom he had engaged as his model. There was the making of an intelligent woman in her, and, good-hearted to the core, he had arranged to have her educated, possibly, so he hinted, with a view to marrying her. But Rossetti, whose principles were exceedingly lax, beguiled the girl away from him. Years afterwards Holman-Hunt met her by chance, a buxom matron with a carriage full of children, on Richmond Hill, and learned that she had married happily. A very simple story, but recited in so vivid a minuteness as to hold the hearers spellbound; the reciter's wonderful memory supplying the actual conversations between the artist and his model, and between him and Rossetti. It began in the afternoon, it went on through dinner to bedtime, it was finished the next morning, by which time it had reached the length of *Sir Charles Grandison*. Grant Allen was impressed beyond measure. He saw materials for a powerful novel in the story. As he said to me, "You know I am always on the look-out for 'copy,' but it wouldn't be 'cricket' to use that plot."

Holman-Hunt was an omnivorous reader; history, of course, mainly that of art, poetry and travel books were his chief favourites, and like men of his time who had

Nonconformist upbringing, he knew his Bible *au fond.* He was more orthodox than heterodox, although he did not attend any place of worship. The Patriarchs were more real to him than they were to Canon Driver,[1] and he believed in the fulfilment of prophecy.

" I have heard you say," he wrote in a letter to me, " that some German critic found out two hundred and fifty (or something like it) unfulfilled prophecies in the Bible. I do not believe the Biblical critics one bit. I know that when I go to the site of Tiberias the only city I see standing there is Tiberias, the one which most of all was hateful to Jesus. Not one word was uttered against it by Jesus, but Capernaum and the other humble and comparatively pious places were denounced and doomed, and not one of them exists. Go to Tyre, to Sidon, to Askelon, to Gaza, and you will find these all ruined, while Jaffa, Beyrout, against which nothing was said, remain where they were. . . .

" If the dream of Isaiah, or, rather, the elaboration of it by him of the Kingdom of Peace was only a poetic imagination, it was still, we may contend, an evolution divinely inspired, for in this century is it not being taken up and enforced, and will it not, despite of kings and Bismarcks, soon be fulfilled?" [1914–16 supplies the answer in the negative.]

" I send this letter with no hope of converting such a heretic as you, but rather to confess how great a heretic I myself am in another way and to give some of my reasons in Divine Rule and yet not anything but a freethinker."

So the Messianic prophecies were very real to Holman-Hunt, despite the unanswerable argument of Dr. Reuss

[1] See *ante,* p. 16.

that Ahaz would have had no consolation if the prophet had said to him, "Do not fear these two kings, because in seven hundred and fifty years the Messiah will be born." [1] His conception of the nature of the Jesus whom it was his delight to portray was more Arian than Athanasian. He accepted as valid the claims made on behalf of the Divine Sonship of Jesus as put forth in the gospels, and the world into which he believed his Saviour has withdrawn was very real to him, to whom the spiritual was the actual.

When I recall all that he said, and all that he was to me, I apply to him what Jesus said of Nathaniel: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

"4, King Edward Street, Oxford,
"*June* 10, 1888.

"My dear Clodd,

"I should greatly like to come down to Aldeburgh and meet Grant Allen there. But I feel very strongly the importance of making use of all the opportunities left me by my ailment to get over my much affected fortunes—and this subject at Magdalen I have set myself to seems to me an important one for me to have painted next year, when as I calculate my *exasperating* piece will be a picture of the Lady of Shalott. An old gentleman who has the greatest desire to look favourably upon my art pretensions sometimes visits my studio, and asks to have the opportunity of talking with my wife alone, and when with her he reveals that his anxiety is that she should use her influence to persuade me to give up painting pictures with mystic suggestions in them. He says, 'Your husband, believe me, has a partiality for mysteries which is unfortunate for his

[1] *Les Prophètes*, Vol. I. p. 233.

reception by the world, for all feel the difficulty of defending such fancies. If I could I would persuade him to paint out the strange orb in the Innocent painting, but I have tried in vain; now I see a canvas with a female figure outlined on it—the hair blown upwards in the most unnatural and ungainly manner, and not only this, but a web tossing itself about in the most confusing manner. Now I trust you can prevail upon him to paint something more in accordance with sober common sense.' Well, the old gentleman very faithfully represents the fashion among picture fanciers of this day! They hate imaginative works unless they are of such simple characters that valentines and copy-books have made people familiar with from babyhood! 'Evil communications corrupt good manners,' done in human figures, with the assurance made that the stout dark figures are the evil communications and the fair graceful ones the good manners. Or an original idea of love shooting at the heart of some one, or uniting a couple with garlands. Now I count upon the Magdalen singing scene [1] as really one without offence in it. The old gentleman will be reassured of my sanity; and the public may even look at my other pictures with more toleration, and it may, while quite satisfying me as a subject of the matter-of-fact kind, bring much needed grist to the mill, so I must not allow myself to think of my own pleasure in the shape of recreation.

"It is hard work to get up at a quarter to four and wind my way up the narrow and steep stairs of the tower, and paint till half-past eleven or twelve without regular breakfast, but I have got a deal of my scene done and soon I shall begin on the figures.

[1] The reference is to the picture, "May Morning on Magdalen Tower."

"I am obliged to dress to go out to dinner, so I can write not more than that I wish you a pleasant holiday.

"Yours affectionately,

"W. Holman-Hunt."

"25, Holywell Street, Oxford,
"*December* 31, 1888.

"My dear Clodd,

"I am kept here with my picture, but the people are most pleasant and kind and the dons at Magdalen help me to the utmost. In a week I may, perhaps, be beginning to think of moving, and when I come home I shall feel that part of the work which of necessity has been trying has been overcome and I shall enjoy the delights of home not without a sense that I have earned them. So far, I think, the impression grows as my picture advances that it is a very worthy subject and growing in interest. It is an advantage, of course, to work with such a feeling and so one encourages shutting one's eyes too much at times to other possibilities, but with a few weeks more work the parts will come together and then we shall be able to sit in judgment on it. You must come, then, and pronounce your verdict.

"Yours affectionately,

"W. Holman-Hunt."

"Draycott Lodge, Fulham,
"*May* 6, 1889.

"My dear Clodd,

. . . . . .

"What old sticks the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's are. They are putting up some mosaics about as dead as Thothmes III, and what a splendid life it would be to illustrate, if done with real intelligence and instinct! Imagine the great scope for consistent contrast there would be with the zealous and fiery

creature standing by at the death of St. Stephen; the heavens opened the while. And then his vision; his wilderness life; his preaching; his tent-making; his domestic teaching; his writing by the hands of an amanuensis; his imprisonments; trials in the arena at Ephesus and in the Court; his position when 'all had forsook me and fled,' and 'but Christ the Lord stood by me.' I can scarcely imagine a more splendid series of subjects of which I have included but half, and to see sprawling figures in feeble imitation of M. Angelo, with angels to match, having wings on shoulders drawn with writing-master's flourish against a gold background, is to me an exhibition of silliness that induces me to say, 'I do not like either art or religion.'

. . . . . .

"Yours affectionately,

"W. Holman-Hunt."

"Draycott Lodge, Fulham, S.W.
"*April* 3, 1899.

"My dear Clodd,

"Among my birthday gifts yesterday not the least welcome was the pretty little volume of the *Rubáiyát* by Omar Khayyám, with your very pertinent inscription and quotation in front. He, or it may be Edward FitzGerald, in parts, as some say, is such a jolly philosopher of the expect-nothing kind, that he is always a treat to read and, for his poetic gems, a lasting glory. He is very bracing in the couplet you quote, and I hope that both of us will still be able to add much to our quota of new work, although it will be done by me without any dimming of the other tent-maker's dream.

"Yours ever affectionately,

"W. Holman-Hunt."

"18, Melbury Road, Kensington, W.
"*July* 4, 1909.

"My dear Clodd,

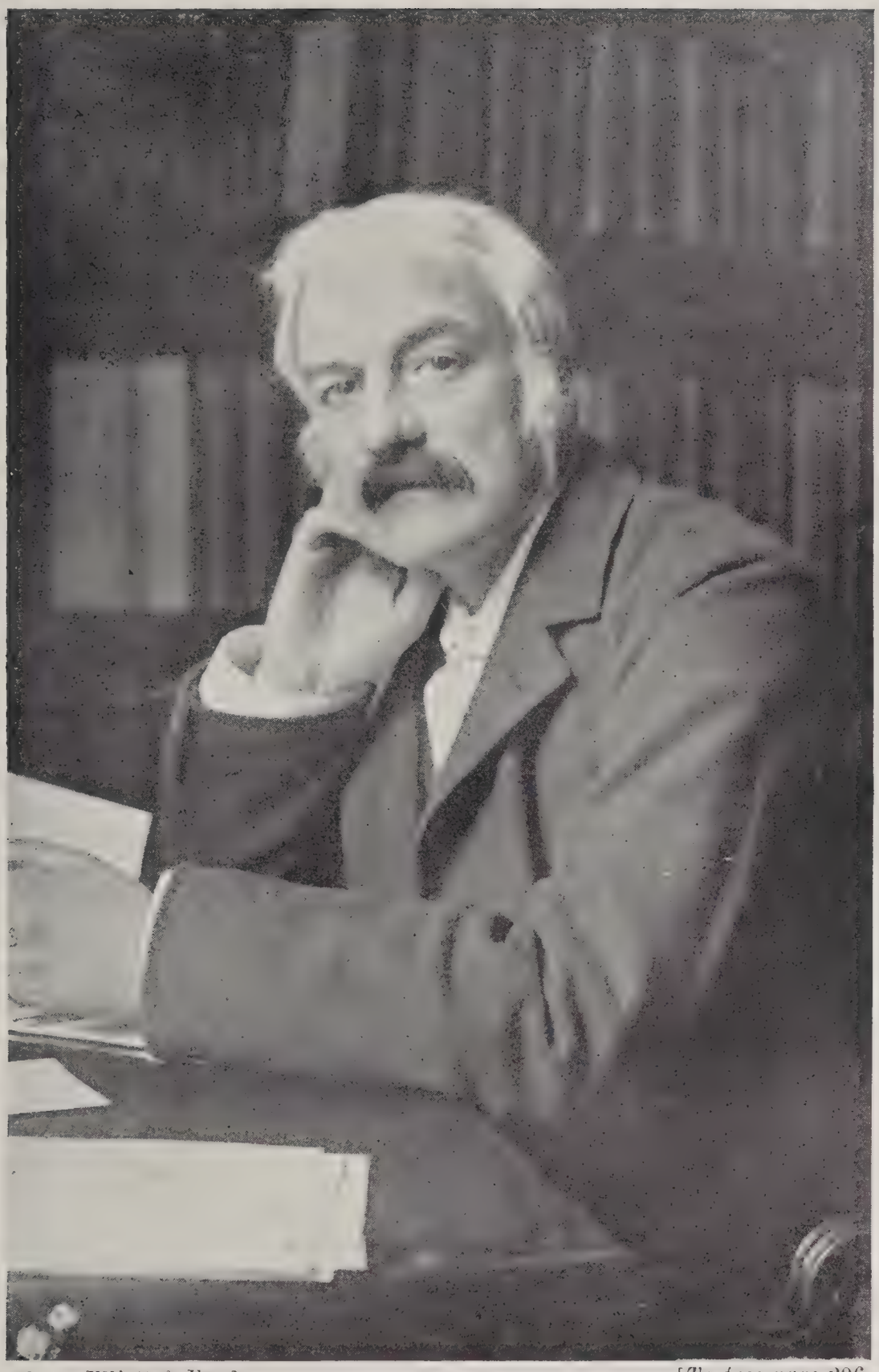
"If now your extra tax of the half year is a little lightened and you have any rare leisure, I think you might find it worth while to run in to Christie's before the Quilter sale of next week. The collection is one of very catholic interest, which used in the days of smoking parties at the hospitable house in Audley Street to be an endless source of delight to people of varied taste in art. Among the good Dutch paintings, one head of the Burgomaster would claim admiration in any gallery of Sir Joshua's. 'Venus a piping boy' is an enchanting example of this master's when he wandered out of the realms of portraiture. Among many excellent examples of modern English painters, Frederick's Walker's 'Bathers' is a delectable breezy painting. When I look at the 'Scapegoat,' the days of peril and exhilarating adventure I passed down at the extreme end of the Dead Sea come back to me vividly; and it is a pleasant memory that Sir Cuthbert, when a schoolboy home from the holidays, seeing the picture for the first time at the Royal Academy, determined if ever it were in his power in mature life to purchase it, he would do so.

"After twenty or so years the opportunity came when Sir Thomas Fairbairn sent all his pictures to Christie's and then Sir Cuthbert became the possessor. Of course, Edith will go to see the pictures and I shall hear from her how the 'Scapegoat' looks as to varnish.

"Believe me,

"Yours affectionately,

"W. Holman-Hunt."



Photo, Elliott & Fry.]

[*To face page* 206.

Yours very sincerely
H Irving

XVII

Andrew Lang (1844–1912)

"I own I do not see the use of lives of penmen not being Johnsons or Scotts. . . . Have you biographed Allen? By all the Totems no mortal shall do aught of the sort for me," wrote Andrew Lang to me. Although he was the author of monographs on Lockhart, Tennyson and others, and of *The Life, Letters and Diaries of Sir Stafford Northcote*, he, in another letter to me, wanted "some short way with the 'Life and Letters' plague."

Grant Allen told me that he was sure that Andrew Lang had gipsy blood in his veins. Swarthy-complexioned, and dark-eyed, he looked it, and in his *Grass of Parnassus* sings about it—

> "Ye wanderers that were my sires,
> Who read men's fortunes in the hand,
> Who voyaged with your smithy fires
> From waste to waste across the land.
> Why did you leave for earth and town
> Your life by heath and river's brink,
> Why lay your gypsy freedom down
> And doom your child to pen and ink?"

His father was John Lang of Selkirk; his mother's maiden name was Jane Sellar. (The name recalls his delightful Memoir of his uncle, Professor Sellar, prefaced to the posthumous volume on *Horace and the Elegiac Poets*). He was educated at Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities and at Balliol College, Oxford, where he took a first in Mods. and in Greats, securing

election to a fellowship at Merton in 1868. From thence until his death his career was wholly that of a man of letters. Neither in golf, nor in either fishing or cricket did he excel; but, in the spirit of Pindar, he sung their praises.

His marvellous versatility (the list of books which he wrote or edited fills sixteen pages of the British Museum Catalogue) has obscured much in his work which is of abiding value. This was in the twin sciences of Folk-lore and Comparative Mythology. Invaluable as these services are to students of the history of civilization, the general public knows little and cares less about them, because the readers who looked to Andrew Lang for entertainment far outnumbered those who sought instruction from him. As no biography of him is probable, the tribute to his serious work should not fail of record so far as an old friend can contribute to that service. Only those who were born two generations back can remember the stir made by Max Müller on the publication of his article on "Comparative Mythology" in the *Oxford Essays* in 1856. His facile pen drew an attractive picture of the ancestors of the leading nations of Europe, and of certain peoples in Asia, dwelling on the Bactrian uplands, speaking a tongue and possessing a mythology which supplied the key to the language, legends and traditions of the Indo-European races. That key, Max Müller argued, was found in tracing to their root-elements the names of Vedic gods and heroes which he and Sir George Cox interpreted as those of the sun, the dawn and other natural phenomena. Hence was formulated that "Solar theory" which so dominated us for many years as to call forth Matthew Arnold's humorous complaint that "One could scarcely look at the sun without having the

sensations of a moth." Max Müller contended that the meaning of the name gave the clue to the meaning of the myth, and that the presence of coarse and grotesque features in the mythology of Hindu, Greek, Roman and Teuton was mainly due to what he called "disease of language," by which the primitive and purer nature-myth was corrupted. *E. g.* the story of Kronus devouring his offspring was the result of a vulgar misunderstanding of the swallowing of the Days by Time. The theory won well-nigh universal acceptance, and held the field for years until doubt was thrown on the validity of the equations; *e. g.* while Max Müller translated the Vedic goddess Urvasi as "the dawn," Dr. Roth translated that name as "lewd or wanton"! One by one the assumed equations were challenged, with the result that scarcely any have survived the more rigid tests of a later comparative philology.

Working, as he says, "in giant ignorance of Mannhardt," on the same lines of enquiry, Lang reached the conclusion shrewdly anticipated by Fontenelle, a nephew of Corneille, more than a century and a half ago, that "all nations invented the astounding part of their myths while they were savages, and retained them from custom and religious conservatism." Hence, to understand the ugly and crazy myths of civilized races, we must make ourselves familiar with the thoughts, manners, and myths of races who are now in the same savage state as were the prehistoric ancestors of Greeks, Romans, and other advanced peoples. This method is summarized in Andrew Lang's last words on the subject in a posthumous review published nine days after his death. "We knew little about the evolution of religion, or of social organizations and institutions, or of mythology, till we began to study them comparatively, by

observing their forms, and as far as possible their development, among all peoples of whom we have sufficient knowledge."

It is, then, in his original contributions towards the supersession of the philological by the anthropological method of interpretation that the folklorist and the comparative mythologist owe Andrew Lang an incalculable debt.

One of his hobbies was to establish a working alliance between the Folklore Society and the Society for Psychical Research. He wanted the Folklorist to see that the stories about ghosts, wraiths and all their kind, were within his province to deal with. And he wanted the Psychical Researcher not to neglect the evidence furnished by savage and even civilized superstition and aught else that comes under the purview of folklore. In this attempt to intervene as "honest broker"—Psycho-Folklorist—as he dubbed himself, when we had a bloodless duel over a Presidential Address of mine to the Folklore Society, he admitted that he had "not quite succeeded." [1] Nor is success possible where the

[1] This Address caused some commotion in the staid circles of the Folklore Society. Among other withdrawals from membership the most notable was that of Mr. Gladstone, who said that he might "possibly think it right to make public the circumstances" compelling that step. To my regret, he never did this, since thereby an interesting controversy would have resulted. He resented my reference to the barbaric element surviving in the Eucharist as administered in Hawarden Church. Cards on which a hymn was printed were distributed among the congregation. The hymn opened with the couplet—

"Jesu, mighty Saviour,
Thou art *in* us now."

In was printed in italics, and a note was added instructing those who did not communicate to sing *with* instead of *in*. Obviously, the idea underlying this falls into line with the barbaric belief that by eating anything the qualities are acquired. Sir J. G. Frazer's

evidence of fact and the prepossessions of fancy attempt harmony. "I have," he says, "been unable to reach any conclusion, negative or affirmative."

He accepted the presidency of the Society for Psychical Research, but his attitude towards the whole business of the occult was that of the doubter. When the Neapolitan "medium," Eusapia Palladino, the "humorist" as he called her, was detected in tricks which had "deceived the very elect," he remarked that "it looked as if pyschical research does somehow damage and pervert the logical faculty of scientific minds." Discussing these matters with him at the Savile Club some years ago, I quoted the verse, "The devils also believe and tremble," when, with a twinkle, he said, "I don't believe, but I tremble." Nevertheless, he gave some comfort to the psychists when, reviewing the late F. W. H. Myers' *Human Personality after Death*, he wrote: "I think, religious faith apart, that human faculty lends fairly strong presumption in favour of the survival of human consciousness."

As Montaigne says of Aristotle, "he hath his oare in every water," so of Lang. He sailed on the wide sea of Comparative Theology, exploring many a country on the voyage. And no unbiassed mind can pursue that survey without discovering that the differences between all the religions of the world are of degree and not of

Golden Bough supplies numerous examples. Lang's comment was amusing: "The new President has made a Speech or an Address or sent a Message (perhaps that is the right phrase in speaking of a President) which has turned the friends of Cinderella upside down. What it was all about I know not, still less do I see how you can, constitutionally, proceed against a President. In such cases it is usual to try assassination. But the Folklore Society, if discontented, have magic and spells at their command, and can perforate a sheep's heart with pins, to their President's 'intention,' as Cardinal Manning and Newman did Masses at each other."

kind; all having their origin and impulse in man's material needs; needs born, primarily, of hunger. He does "not live by bread alone" because, as Smith Minor says, "he would die of thirst," but he cannot live without it, and in food-quest lies the beginnings of every religion. All this Lang made the subject of several books, one of which, *Myth, Ritual and Religion*, had the envied honour of being put on the *Index Expurgatorius*, under the pontificate of Leo XIII. Lang sought an explanation of this through one of the English Catholic bishops, but it was not accorded. That was in 1896. The Church could hardly be expected to remove from the Index the work of a man who wrote flippantly on the excommunication of Dr. St. George Mivart by Cardinal Vaughan. One grievance of the prelate against the biologist was that he didn't believe in the story in *Bel and the Dragon* (vv. 36, 37), that an angel picked up Habakkuk by the hair and carried him from Jewry to share his soup (was it broth? Lang asks), with Daniel in Babylon. Lang chaffingly regrets that Mivart didn't swallow the soup story and points out that it has several parallels in the phenomena of Spiritualism. One of these is that of a lady who flew in a few moments from Bayswater to Mr. Stead's house at Wimbledon.

Meeting him at the Savile one day, he saluted me as "Brer Jackal." Seeing me puzzled, he said, "Haven't you seen the Catholic *Month?* You get it and then you'll know why I called you that." Which I did, and found in the issue of September 1898 a fierce review of Lang's *Making of Religion* by the Rev. G. Tyrrell. That polite priest starts with describing "the Clodds, the Allens, the Langs and other popularizers of the uncertain results of evolution-philosophy," as "of the crowd of

sciolists who follow like jackals in the lion's wake"; the lion being Sir E. B. Tylor.

Speaking "as man to man," as the phrase goes, there was an elusiveness and reserve in Lang's talk on religious subjects. Matthew Arnold, in his Introduction to Gray in the *English Poets*, quotes a remark of James Brown, Master of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, Gray's executor, that he "never spoke out." And this applies to Lang. The hesitancy is shown, the humorous blended with the serious, in this letter. It acknowledges a copy of *Jesus of Nazareth* sent to him through the publisher, Kegan Paul.

"1, Marloes Road, W.,
"*November* 24, 1880.

"DEAR CLODD,

"I have not yet recovered your new address and am constrained to thank you through Paul for *Jesus*. This sounds not such a very wrong thing to do. If we lived in a properly holy country I would certainly denounce you to the Inquisition.

"I confine my blameless studies to the evolution of Heathen gods concerning which the Prophet assures us that they are vanity. Then I have no lore in Israelite matters, except that Robertson Smith says Rachel and Leah were Totems. For plentiful ignorance I cannot criticize you except that I miss the Resurrection in your biography. This is, or ought to be, a burning question, but alas! *il y a fagots et fagots* but none for the heretic. Perhaps the more Christian plan would be to convert you, but it is longer and more uncertain and less amusing to a faithful people.

"With many thanks all the same, though I do not fancy we can agree on the subject,

"Yours very truly,
"A. LANG."

Here is a letter on a less controversial matter—

"1, Marloes Road, W.,
"*October* 22, 1908.

"DEAR CLODD,

"The anthropologist gets as near his primitive man as he can, far enough away; and the psychist takes what evidence he gets to go to a jury. However, as you are rather too old a bird to learn a new tune (while the older bird tries to pick up the melodies as he goes along), here is a curious psychological game with nothing in it to shock the retrograde and obsolete. You make your mind as blank of conscious thought as you can and you wait for the *words*—rather than thoughts—that pop into your head. As one rapidly forgets, you write down every clause and wait for more. The result would make a boiled owl laugh. I found this out only to-day and have been giggling over the records. Do try it; one catches an aspect of one's nature hitherto veiled. As for you, as you see illusions hypnagogique the faces spoken of [I had told Lang that sometimes, before getting to sleep, a row of leering faces would pass before me], you are much more hallucinable than most people. I find that most people not only don't see them but don't believe that anybody does. This is the true scientific spirit. Bless you, I do not exclude wild animals, but we have evidence as to their psychic faculties. Dogs, one knows, and cats are highly psychical, but we have no companionship with tigers, etc.

"Yours sincerely,
"A. LANG."

In the *Morning Post* of the same date Lang describes the experiment referred to in the above letter. He

made his mind as blank as possible and watched for any words that floated into his consciousness. " These words," he says, " I wrote down. The results were very laughable. My own way of writing is not Johnsonian. But the style of my unpremeditated writings was full of long words. The first words almost that swam uncalled into my ken were, ' Affability is the characteristic of the dawdling persecutor.' A longer ' message ' began thus : ' Observing the down-grade tendency of the Sympneumatic currents, the Primate remarked that he could no longer regard Kafoozleum as an aid to hortatory eloquence.' "

Some of the obituary notices of him—that of *The Times*, for example, spoke of a " touch of superciliousness in his manner," and of an aloofness which barred intimacy. Meredith said to me : " Lang had no heart, otherwise he might have been a good poet." Had Meredith known him, he would have modified his judgment. I told him so, and on a later visit I took him *Rhymes à la Mode*, that he might read at least one poem, the touching *Desiderium* written in memory of Miss Alleyne, Lang's sister-in-law. Here are two stanzas—

" Ah, you that loved the twilight air,
The dim-lit hour of quiet best,
At last, at last, you have your share
Of what life gave so seldom, rest !

Yes, rest beyond all dreaming deep,
Of labour, nearer the Divine,
And pure from fret, and smooth as sleep,
And gentle as thy soul, is thine."[23]

The aloofness was only skin-deep, thin as the epiderm. Once penetrated, the warm human blood was felt, and if Andrew Lang was not of the rare company who have a genius for friendship, those who came to know him

longest learned to appreciate him most. This was my experience, and the testimony may have more weight because our points of view sometimes differed fundamentally, and there was more than one skirmish between us. These only emphasized many kindly acts—not least among them the thankless task, voluntarily offered, of reading one's proofs—a labour which, in his own case, he detested. I know that sometimes he gave offence by the tone of his reviews, the temptation to banter being too great to be resisted. But he bore no malice; and they who submit their wares to the critic must not be too squeamish over the verdict. Andrew Lang well and worthily maintained the high traditions of his calling, and in the sweetness and purity of home life he kept himself " unspotted from the world." He died at Banchory, and rests, " Life's tired-out guest," under the shadow of the ruined cathedral of his beloved St. Andrews.

XVIII

Francis Hindes Groome (1851–1902)

If there was no gipsy blood in Francis Hindes Groome, the nomad, which is primitive and persistent, was strong in him. He was the second son of FitzGerald's intimate neighbour, Robert Hindes Groome, Archdeacon of Suffolk and Rector of Monk Soham, whose grandfather was master and owner of the *Unity* lugger in which the poet Crabbe sailed to London. The Hindes were connections of ours, but, despite arboreal instincts, I have not climbed that genealogical tree of many branches. The old captain made enough money to buy the advowson of Monk Soham, where, in succession, the Groomes were rectors. There Francis Hindes Groome was born in 1851. It was his privilege in boyhood to hear his father and FitzGerald and William Bodham Donne talk " like chapters out of George Eliot's novels," so he tells us in his delightful *Two Suffolk Friends*, wherein are masterly portraits of his father and FitzGerald. FitzGerald's *Letters* tells us how he loved " the Old Giant Handel; whose coursers with necks with thunder clothed and long resounding pace, never tire." [1] In contrast, with a taste less classical, the Archdeacon sang popular songs at village concerts. At one of these, a brother parson, who was in the chair, announced that the Reverend Robert Groome would sing *Thomas Bowling!* The village greens and commons of East

[1] *Letters*, Vol. I. p. 86.

Anglia were much more than now the squatting-grounds of caravans of gipsies, with whom young Groome made friends, drinking-in their roving spirit. In time he could *rokka Romanes,* "speak Gipsy," better than Borrow; in fact I have heard Watts-Dunton say that Borrow's knowledge of gipsy life and language was superficial compared with Groome's; so far as a Gorgio could be initiated, he had been made a Romany. It gave Meredith no small pleasure when Groome praised his character-drawing of Kiomo in *Harry Richmond.* "Chastity of nature, intense personal pride, were as proper to her as the free winds are to the heaths, they were as visible to dull divination as the milky blue about the iris of her eyeballs." In Groome's romantic novel *Kriegspiel* his character-drawing of the gipsy Ercilla Beschalé surpasses Borrow's Ursula and equals Cervantes' Gitanilla. Here is an interesting letter anent *Kriegspiel*—

"3, Whitehouse Loan, Edinburgh,
"*January* 19, 1896.

"My dear Clodd,

"I mean to come south for a week next month, and was wondering whether by any chance there will be an O.K. dinner on then, for if so I could time my visit accordingly. I am just bringing out a very novel venture in the form of a novel, 'Kriegspiel the War Game,' the obscurity of which title is meant to be elucidated by the quotation—

> "'But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
> Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days;
> Hither and thither moves and makes and slays,
> And one by one back in the Cupboard lays.'

It is a very sensational story, if not indeed mildly improbable. Lang, who read it in MS., pronounces

it ' Exciting and unsound : only isn't the butter spread rather thick ? ' Which, I think, is a very just criticism. The scene is laid largely in Suffolk, and you will recognize some of the localities—Parham Hall, with bits of Letheringham and Hengrave. I wish its success may be half as good as that of my little ' Two Suffolk Friends,' a success as amazing and largely ascribable to yourself. I shall send you an early copy.

" Ever most truly yours,

" Frank H. Groome."

" Whitehouse Loan, Edinburgh,

" *May* 27, 1896.

" I believe I have to thank you for the most kindly review of the great novel in the *Sketch*, where the portrait reminds me that I have been owing you a photo for months and years : at last I repay the debt. If the exertions of friends avail aught *K.* should be a success, still, I don't think of turning a professional novel-writer. No, I am engaged just now on a Universal Pronouncing Biographical Dictionary, the compiling of which is fine, busy-lazy work, and whose sale will beat that of all novels but Marie Corelli's.

" Two days ago I walked twenty miles over the Cauld Stane Step (1,254 feet); if you have read R. L. S.'s *Weir of Hermiston* you should know where that is, at the back of the Pentlands. I was quite proud at the finish, not having walked twenty miles for (I daresay) ten years, and at once arranged for a little walking tour this next week-end up Loch Lomond way. I wish I could be at your next O.K. dinner at Marlow. (I believe I recognize the attraction) but I am thinking of revisiting Germany in July, taking London (or rather Surrey) and Suffolk on my way back.

"What think you of the translation of our friend Watts?—Dunton, I cannot rightly say I like the name. If, or when rather, you see Clement Shorter, pray express to him that he has 'done me proud,' and believe me to remain,

"Ever most truly yours,

"F. H. Groome."

Apropos of Theodore Watts double-barrelling his name, I asked Meredith why he had done it. "Really, Sir Reynard, I'm surprised at your dulness." "Agreed," said I, "but other fellows are as dull. I thought MacColl (then Editor of the *Athenæum*, to which Watts-Dunton was a regular contributor) could tell me, but he didn't know." "Well," said Meredith, "I can. As a boy you were taught Dr. Watts's *Divine and Moral Songs*, and you know what a vogue they had, and for anything I know to the contrary, may have still. So, of course, our dear Theodore doesn't want to run the risk of being confused, years hence, with the author of 'How doth the little busy bee' in any anthology in which his poems may have a place." I thanked Meredith for so lucid an explanation!

In *Gipsy Tents*, published in 1881, Groome set down in vivacious detail the story of his vagabond life among the Romani, not, however, adding how he stole the heart of Esmeralda, whose tambourine, by the way, is among the many unique treasures which my friend Clement Shorter—*optimo hospitum*—can boast of in his wonderful collection of literary relics at 16, Marlborough Place. No lover of *Lavengro* and *Romany Rye* should neglect that book.

For a good many years Groome lived in Edinburgh, working as sub-editor of *Chambers' Encyclopædia*, which explains the references in this letter.

" 339, High Street, Edinburgh,
" *July* 30, 1892.

" Thanks for your letter and the inclosures. Herewith R. A. Proctor. As to Bates, Patrick will be much obliged if you would think-up a brief article, space for which may be squeezed out of Batavia and Miss Bateman. Also Weismann, you will judge how much he must have whilst remembering we are rather cramped for space.

" I got back here Thursday evening, and find here the loveliest weather (for Scotland). It is hard settling down to work.

" I return Lady Gurdon's letter. Appreciation of my Father's stories always pleases me greatly. Ah me! I would that to-morrow I might be rowing up again your Aldeburgh river. Well, I shall look back to that day and forward to just such another.

" Ever truly yours,
" F. H. Groome."

The reference in the foregoing is to a lamented and accomplished friend, the wife of Sir Brampton Gurdon (both are dead), who endeared himself to his fellow-Omarians and whose generous entertainment of the " pilgrims " after the ceremony of the planting of the rose-bushes at Boulge is a cherished remembrance. Lady Camilla, whose tales and sketches of provincial life were posthumously issued under the title of *Memories and Fancies*, had become keenly interested in folk-lore, and gathered a valuable collection of material which was published by the Folklore Society.[1]

[1] *County Folklore* (Suffolk). Collected and edited by the Lady Eveline Camilla Gurdon (1893).

"Grundisburgh Hall, Woodbridge,
"*July* 25, 1892.

"DEAR MR. CLODD,

"Thank you very much for the *F. L. Journal* containing the 'Philosophy of Rumpelstiltskin.' It is a most interesting article and has given me a great deal to think about. If you can come on Friday, pray do so, the Flower Show has been changed to an earlier date, so we shall be free on the 5th and so glad to see you.

"I have not got Moor's *Oriental Fragments*, but possibly it is in the Ipswich Museum, or failing that, I feel sure Capt. Moor of Bealings would lend me a copy, which would save Mr. Hindes Groome the trouble of sending his to me.

"The article in *Blackwood* which you have so kindly sent me is delightful: my husband and I read it together, and really shouted with laughter. The beautiful story of the 'Only Darter' I had already read, and been very much impressed by, in the *Suffolk N. and Q.* It seems to me quite beautiful. I hardly know what to compare it to—it is as good as some of Barrie's best work and Miss Wilkins' best stories.

"When you come I have an interesting letter to show you from a cousin in Scotland about Firstfoot: she has been questioning a Perthshire man.

"Yours sincerely,

"E. CAMILLA GURDON."

In December 1892 Groome wrote to me about FitzGerald's old friend John Loder, of Woodbridge bookselling fame, who has enriched my library with two volumes which belonged to FitzGerald, *Persian Miscellanies* and Russell's *Memorials of the Life and Works of Thomas Fuller*. Groome adds that Loder "knows

Canon Ainger, who is by way of a FitzGeraldian if not indeed an Omar Khayyámist."

Among the more prominent men of the cloth whom I met at the delightful little dinners given by dear old Edward Hawkins, father of "Anthony Hope," at the snug vicarage in Bridewell Place, was Canon Ainger. I accepted it as token of friendship that when he had undertaken a monograph on *Crabbe* in "The English Men of Letters Series," he invited himself to stay with me at Aldeburgh, curious to see what, if any, traces of the poet survived there. There are none: the cottage in which he was born has long vanished beneath the encroaching sea; the old "Salt House" at Slaughden, where he assisted his father as collector of the salt duties, was demolished fifty years ago, and the one association that remains is the tumbling old quay along which the poet rolled the barrels. Of the letters from Canon Ainger which I have preserved, only the following is free from personal and unimportant matter.

"Master's House, Temple, E.C.,
"*August* 2, 1899.

"Dear Mr. Clodd,

"I ought sooner to have acknowledged your friendly letter, but the close of the session brings many calls upon one's time.

"Thanks for your reference to Mrs. FitzGerald's letter to Tennyson, which I was glad to have recalled to me.

"It is strange that after seven years thinking of it, Fitz did not realize the risk of the step he was taking. I had not known it was so long as you tell me.[1] I am very glad to find you so entirely agree with me as to the merits of that miniature biography.[2]

[1] Fitz-Gerald's marriage to Lucy Barton.

[2] *Poems and Letters of Bernard Barton, with a Memoir by E. F. G.* (1853).

"There has just come into my possession a copy of the 1821 Keats (the *Lamia* and other poems) with some interesting MS. of Keats himself in it, not only an inscription to the friend to whom it was sent, but some sarcastic remarks on the Publisher's Preface. I should much like to show it to you some day after the coming vacation.

"After next Sunday I shall be a good deal away until we re-open our Church (if all's well) on the first of October. Many thanks for your kind offer of a welcome when I am next 'down Aldeburgh way.' It will give me great pleasure to accept it.

"Meanwhile, believe me, dear Mr. Clodd,

"Very truly yours,

"ALFRED AINGER."

To return for a moment to Edward Hawkins. Supping with him one evening, the late H. R. Haweis being the other guest, Hawkins told us that, on the previous Sunday, they had heard Haweis's father preach in the church where his father had preached one hundred and twenty years before! The explanation was that the grandfather had preached at his ordination, when he was twenty-three, that he had married when he was past sixty and that his son, on the occasion in question, was eighty-three.

An item or two of literary gossip and criticism in them may warrant the addition of these letters.

"339, High Street, Edinburgh,
"*April* 13, 1895.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

". . . So you are at Aldeburgh for Easter. I would I were there too, and I wish I could promise to come later

on. But my ties with Suffolk are loosened, now my sisters have given up the manor-house at Pakenham, and my doctor brother is leaving Stowmarket. But I shall certainly see you. I should like to manage another O.K. dinner in the country, for the last one survives as a pleasant memory.

"I haven't yet read *The Woman who Did.* 'The Man who Couldn't' would make a fine companion volume. I have just been glancing over the new *Men of the Time.* It is an immense improvement on Moon's edition, but the omissions are still remarkable. Crockett, Luke Fildes, Mrs. Clifford, R. Bridges, Holyoake, are a few out of a list of forty or fifty.

"Very truly yours,
"F. H. Groome."

"137, Warrender Park Road, Edinburgh,
"*June* 10, 1898.

"My *Gypsy Folk Tales* (Hurst & Blackett) is nearly finished—a big 8vo. of over 400 pp. I hope you won't object to the following, 'To MM. Cosquin, Clodd, Jacobs, Lang, and their fellow Folklorists this Book is respectfully dedicated.' I, as a non-professional folk-lorist, address the book to those who are. I shall, of course, send you an early copy, but I don't quite know when it will be out. It will contain a good deal of controversial (and probably controvertible) matter, but I hope and think that you will be surprised at the additions it makes to folk tales collected within the Anglo-Welsh area—versions of 'The Master Thief'; 'Strong Hans'; 'Our Lady's Child'; 'Oh! if I could but shiver'; 'The Battle of the Birds'; 'Ferdinand the Frightful,' etc., etc. There are also hosts of Gypsy

stories from Turkey, Roumania, the Bukowina, Transsylvania, Galicia, etc. . . .

" Ever truly yours,
" F. H. Groome."

Besides his letters and the gifts of his books, there is a little green volume about which he wrote : " I am sending you a copy of FitzGerald's *Polonius* which I think you will like to have. I picked it up the other day for a few pence in a bookseller's catalogue, where it was entered under the heading ' Facetiæ.' "

Within four years after the publication of *Gypsy Folk Tales*, an important addition to material for the comparative study of the folk tales of the world, brain trouble numbed the faculties of one of the most gifted scholars and lovable men whom I have known or am likely to know. Death released him in his fifty-first year.

XIX

J. Allanson Picton (1832–1910)
Moncure D. Conway (1832–1907)

"The Club that most interested me was the Omar Khayyám. It would require many pages to tell of my delightful memories of my brother Omarians." Thus wrote Moncure Conway in his *Autobiography*, wherein he goes on to narrate the story of the planting of the rose-bushes on FitzGerald's grave and then coming with other friends for a week-end convivium to Strafford House. Then he speaks of the Sunday gatherings at my house in London: "those evenings at Rosemont as a time when we grew. Picton was always there." Picton, at that time, had abandoned preaching for educational work, being, with Huxley and Mark Wilks, a member of the first School Board for London.

After occupying pulpits in Manchester and Leicester (which latter place he represented in Parliament from 1885 till 1894) he became minister of a Congregational Chapel in Hackney. Always tending towards liberalism in theology, he delivered a series of lectures on the *Religion of Jesus*, which evidenced such divergence from orthodox theories of the divinity of Jesus that he resigned his charge. A man of very remarkable gifts and wide scholarship, the possession of fair means and ample leisure enabled him to follow his bent, the goal of which was in Pantheism. "If I am to be remembered

at all," he said to me, "let it be as Picton the Pantheist." More than one of his books is given to making popular, as far as that difficult task is possible, the Philosophy of Spinoza, the "Great Prophet," the man who looked on the Universe and called it God. He found a congenial spirit in meeting Sir Frederick Pollock, to whose masterly and definitive book on Spinoza he acknowledged deep obligation. He won, what was not easily secured by those whom he met, the regard of Sir Alfred Lyall. An ex-dissenting parson who had become an ardent convert to Pantheism was a *rara avis*, and Picton's story of his passage from the creed of the Congregationalists to the most creedless of all beliefs interested a mind like Lyall's which had been in close contact with the contemplative and tolerant religions of the East. He enjoyed a story which Picton repeated in his *Religion of the Universe*. "Things are as they are. To ask why they are so is no more reasonable than the question once put to me long ago by a little girl of eleven or twelve years and which I think was the most comprehensive question ever put to me in my life. 'Sir,' she said, 'please tell me why there was ever anything at all?' How could I reply except as I did? 'My dear, I really do not know, but here the things are and we must make the best of them.'" From Picton's many letters to me the following are chosen as showing his general attitude in breadth and variety of interest.

"Caerlŷr, Conway,
"*November* 11, 1901.

"My dear Clodd,

"Your letter of the 9th has given me great pleasure, not only from the kindness and interest it shows, but also because it is such a gratification to hear

from you again. I thank you heartily for your book[1] of which I had heard a good deal, but which to my own loss I had not seen. It is a very interesting exposition of the great world of *Aberglaube* lurking behind and beneath most nursery stories. You possess a style eminently adapted to draw readers on into the charmed circle of your influence. Some of your remarks come specially home to me in my *sæva indignatio* against prevalent sacred pretences. Truly, as you say on p. 97, 'there may be profit in the reminder of the shallow depth to which knowledge of the orderly sequence of things has yet penetrated in the many.' As to the power of iron as a charm, is it possible that it originated in the conservative notion probably entertained at its first introduction that it was offensive to unseen powers? The feeling which dictated persistence in the use of stone knives for sacred purposes must have been associated with the notion that iron was offensive to the spirit world. (But, then, perhaps that should have applied to copper and bronze as well.)

"As to the *name*—I have always been haunted by a curious desire to tear up and throw out of the railway carriage windows the small printed labels of newspaper wrappers addressed to me. It is an unreasoning and instinctive action—which possibly may be a sort of atavism. The philological indentification of 'name' with 'soul' is very interesting, and appears to me probable.

"I need scarcely say I have little hope of any result from my protest against the present demoralizing in my *Bible in the School*. Watts asked me to write it and I did. But it will be no use. I can understand the state of mind which clings desperately to disappear-

[1] *Tom Tit Tot: An Essay on Savage Philosophy in Folk Tale.*

ing supernatural sanctions because they still seem to the perplexed soul necessary to morality. But I cannot understand the state of mind which frankly surrenders superstition for itself as utterly false, and yet insists on teaching it to children as true in the interests of morality.

"I wish you would take an opportunity of revisiting this lovely valley, where I am now writing with my bay window wide open to the night. I hope your son, whom I was so glad to see when he called, gave you a good account of my eyrie. It is not Tai Bach, but a new house built by myself on a ledge of the steep hill above. Pray come to see it some time.

"I am ever,

"Yours most truly,

"J. Allanson Picton."

"Caerlŷr, Conway,
"*November* 26, 1901.

My dear Clodd,

"Really I am very sorry that I have exceeded the bounds of propriety in delaying my acknowledgement of your exceedingly kind gift of a second book. The truth is that though I have given up ploughing the seashore of politics I have a good many public and benevolent duties of one sort or another here, though of course, I could have acknowledged receipt, I could not have expressed my thanks with knowledge until now.

"I marvel much at your power of achieving 'multum in parvo.' It is astonishing how much is compressed at no sacrifice of clearness into the compass of this book on *Primitive Man*. As to iron, I find on p. 192 a statement of the fact that special powers were attrib-

uted to the metal as against witches, etc. But neither there nor in other passages on the metals do I find an explanation, unless indeed the heavenly origin of meteoric iron suggests it. On p. 97 you make a remark which touches human sympathies: 'The cost' of 'escape from false impressions of things makes the thoughtful weep.' I have also been saddened by the thought of the long, dark, painful course of human evolution. But I have comforted myself by reflecting that palæolithic or neolithic man had no better conditions of things with which to compare his lot. *We* think how *we* should feel amidst such squalor. Hence our pity. But is it not tolerably certain that each generation, being adapted to its surroundings, was fairly happy?

"Believe me,

"Yours very sincerely,

"J. ALLANSON PICTON.

"P.S. As you wish to make use of Huxley's words to me re *Bible in School* I had better give you the particulars. It was in the street—Pall Mall, near the Athenæum, not very long before his death. It was only a momentary conversation, but he distinctly regretted the failure of his proposal for selected extracts and added: 'Indeed, I am now inclined to think that you were right.' I will not guarantee the exact syllables, but they were certainly to that effect.

"J. A. P."

"Caerlŷr, Penmaenmawr, R.S.O.,

"*May* 13, 1904.

"MY DEAR CLODD,

"Assuming that you will be at Strafford House on Sunday, I write to say how deeply I appreciate your

kind letter of the 8th instant re *The Religion of the Universe.* Your sympathy is all the more valuable for its discrimination. Our attitude towards the Universe, especially at this transitional stage of religion, when the old foundations are breaking up and the more permanent clearly discerned below is, as you say, very much a matter of temperament. And the different temperaments would do well to emulate your large tolerance.

" Still seeing how something in the nature of religion, an instinctive sense of an encompassment by a life larger than one's own has inveterately accompanied every step of human evolution since the word human became applicable at all, I find it impossible to believe that the disappearance of a special and arbitrary conception of the encompassing Life can possibly abrogate so essentially fundamental an element in the spiritual forces of evolution. I write in some haste, for I have to go out, but shall hope for *viva voce* continuation and correction. I think I must take the ten o'clock train on the 21st.

" Yours very truly,

" J. Allanson Picton."

" Caerlŷr, Penmaenmawr, R.S.O.,
" *February* 5, 1905.

" My dear Clodd,

" I have a good many things to say and I hope I shall not bore you. First as to Professor Barton's ' Semitic Origins.' I am very thankful for the opportunity of reading it, and when you are able to let me know whether I should address it to Aldeburgh or otherwise, will return it. I think there is a very large, perhaps one might say an overwhelming, amount of probability in his main theory of the origin of Semitic religion in sexual rites connected with the revival of

nature in whatever season answers in those latitudes to our spring. The word revival reminds me of a curious letter in to-day's *Times* from a native 'Cymro' on the sexual associations of more modern religion. As an item of social lore it is worth looking at. But Barton deals with times concerning which evidence can hardly be said to be available except by way of indirect inference from later facts. I fear there is some truth in the strictures of *Man* [Sept. 1903] pasted on cover, as to the over confidence of the author. You can scarcely get Jahweh out of Ishtar except as you get what is called 'spontaneous generation' into the beginning of organic evolution. You have a feeling that it must have been so, and there is no more to be said. By the way, I don't know why Barton and Budde and lots of others drop the final aspirate of Jahweh, and write Jahwe. My very limited Hebrew at least teaches me that the word is a 'quadrilateral'—*i. e.* with four original consonants of which the final aspirate is one. Estlin Carpenter and Bettersly in their *Hexateuch* always render it as I do, 'Jahweh.' However, I don't pretend to any authority in such things. I think the chapters on 'transformations' of the Ishtar Cult are admirable. I am now reading Budde, to whom I was attracted by the notes of Barton, and I find him amazingly clear and concise for a German. (I preferred the German, though he gave the lectures in English.) His case for the indebtedness of the Hebrews to the Kenites for their religion is very strong.—But what bothers me is that all these learned men persist in talking as though there were a residium of supernatural 'revelation' or direction in the evolution of Hebrew religion such as—at least by implication—is wanting in other religions. So far as I know neither Flinders

Petrie nor any other Egyptologist has found any evidence whatever for the captivity in Egypt or the Exodus. I know Estlin Carpenter thinks that the legend may have arisen from a temporary entanglement of a small nomad Hebrew clan in Egypt. And there is sense in that. But a good deal more is assumed by Barton and Budde. The fact is I am a good deal disheartened in my old age by the 'make-believe' prevalent among educated and even cultured people on the subject of supernatural religion. However, I must draw to a close. I have got 'Pantheism, its Story and Significance, a sketch by etc.' type-written in duplicate. I wonder whether you would mind the trouble of reading it when you are at Aldeburgh. I should value your opinion much, while of course retaining freedom of judgment. It is probably not quite what you would expect. I treat nothing as genuine Pantheism which does not absolutely exclude any other *Being*—as distinguished from existence—than that of God. For this reason I have nothing to say about Plato—though a little about the New Platonists and very little about the Christian Mystics, who were not real Pantheists. I concentrate attention on Spinoza—and endeavour—vain hope!—to give a more popular exposition than Pollock.

"As there seems no hurry, take your own time about replying and believe me,

"Yours very truly,

"J. Allanson Picton."

"Caerlŷr, Conway,
"*July* 26, 1906.

"My dear Clodd,

"Many thanks for the *Open Court* frontispiece. I don't think I have ever before seen any likeness of

Spinoza, and I have gazed and scrutinized with deep interest. At first one has the feeling that so transcendent a mind ought to have had a more imposing face. But, as Mrs. Picton pointed out, the eyes have the glance of genius. The place of origin is not named. Is it the often-mentioned portrait at the Hague? You don't say anything about expecting it back. Perhaps you have another copy. In any case I am obliged to you for sending it. I have written a short contribution to the *Agnostic Annual* on 'The Faith of a Pantheist.' The limits imposed were such that it has been like an effort to distil the ocean before me into a pint pot. But quite possible even an endeavour at impossible compression may be useful.

"Constables have not given any indication as to when they are going to issue the 'Handbook,' though in sending the last revised MS. I asked the question. After the summer I shall ask again.

"Petrie's book on Sinai and Serabut is a wonderful record of research. But I am not satisfied with his rationalization of the Exodus. I fear it is another instance of the strange prepossession shown by even men of distinguished intellect to take for granted that Jewish myths must have a core of history. For myself I incline more to 'Musre' and the consequent 'Jerahmeel!'

"When Petrie finds a single relic *in situ* or inscribed brick in Goshen which implies the Mosaic story, the question may be re-opened.—Did you notice in the first public announcements of Grenfell's most recent finds in the Fayoum, a fragment of a gospel was mentioned, showing no relation to the four? It is odd that it is not included in the show at Somerset House. Should you have any chance of enquiring about it?

"I have a juvenile banker staying with me, and he thinks you must be free by now from the Herculanean labours of July and therefore I have written the more freely.

"Yours very truly,
"J. Allanson Picton."

"Caerlŷr, Penmaenmawr, R.S.O.,
"*August* 7, 1908.

"My Dear Clodd,

"In your *Pioneers of Evolution* you do not—unless I am sadly blind—refer to the part played by Astrology and Alchemy in preparing the way for Astronomy and Chemistry. I must say that I have only been renewing my ancient knowledge of your work by glancing through again and examining the Index.

"As I have to touch on both the above subjects, I have looked through Ecclesiastical histories and Cyclopædias, etc., to find any evidence that the Church condemned either Astrology or Alchemy as it condemned magic and witchcraft. I get no result. I have found no record of any such condemnation. But I know your reading has been very much wider than mine. I should be greatly obliged if you could refer me to any such condemnation. It seems to me that so long as Astrologers and Alchemists could keep clear of any suspicion of *magic* they were safe. They did not deny anything in the Bible and therefore the Church was not concerned. Of course if Astrologers had been star-worshippers it would have been a different thing. Kepler wrote horoscopes for gain—and defended it in a magnificent passage which I quoted nearly fifty years ago in *Heroes and Martyrs of Science*. I don't want to trouble you, but if at your convenience you can let me know of

any condemnation you have met with I should be thankful.

" Yours very truly,
" J. Allanson Picton."

Moncure Conway came of a good old Virginian stock. He was born of parents opposed to slavery, yet they were slave-owners in their own despite, since the institution was an integral part of social conditions in the Southern States of America. He has told in detail his life history from the time when, as a youth, he became a Methodist preacher and reproved some lady members of his church for the "sin" of dancing, to his settlement in London and his travels in the East in old age. Passing from creed to creed, each being in turn more liberal than the one abandoned, he became minister of the Ethical Church in South Place, Finsbury. I enjoyed his friendship for more than thirty years—a friendship sweetened by ever-growing affection for a brave and brotherly soul.

Edward FitzGerald said of his friendships that they were like " loves," and so it was with those of Moncure Conway. His letters to me were often headed " Beloved." When after twenty-one years' ministry at South Place, he returned to America, they were charged with the feeling, almost the fear, that the thousands of miles separating him might estrange him from old friends and be the bar to renewal of communion. Happily, the fear was falsified. When one heard he was in New York, a letter would come from Paris with promise of a visit to London, and then, on his arrival, there would be the merry repetition of farewell dinners which became as numerous as the " last appearances " of a popular actor.

Conway had "warmed both hands before the fire of life," and revelled in the glow. He had travelled much, finding most delight in a *Pilgrimage to the Wise Men of the East*, the title of his last book. There he was in the birthplace of the great religions. From their sacred scriptures he had selected the material of his *Sacred Anthology*—the Bible of South Place. Little escaped him, as this extract from a letter shows.

"About twenty miles out of Madras I drove to the ancient church of St. Thomas, said in the legend to have gone there and suffered martyrdom. Not far from the church is a stone with reddish stains left there by St. Thomas who (like Kristna) was wounded in the head. The old Portuguese priest told me that an English antiquarian, a 'Positivist' (he could not tell me the name) dug under the stone and found a tablet on which was a rudely-designed dove and an inscription which in English was: 'He who is the pure God, blessed for ever.' I wonder if it may not be possible for some man of your acquaintance to tell me who that Positivist was, in what language the inscription was written, and whether the details above—pencilled on the spot, almost unreadably—are correct? I would pay an investigator or verifier."

He had read many books; he had mixed with many distinguished contemporaries—Emerson and Carlyle, Darwin and Huxley, Herbert Spencer, Martineau, Mazzini and others. At his house in Hammersmith and elsewhere, graced by a charming and cultured hostess (Mrs. Conway was a sister of R. H. Dana, author of the well-known *Two Years before the Mast*), I met some of his delightful fellow countrymen, securing

me pleasant talks, *e.g.* with Lowell and John Hay. I wish I could convey the dulcet tones in which Lowell spoke of the charm of London—what others have called its "soul." It brought to my memory an amusing story told us by Professor Ward Howe, whom Grant Allen and I met when we were in Egypt. An Englishman travelling for the first time to the "hub of culture" (the flattering term has ceased to be applicable) asked the ticket collector, as the train neared the station, whether it was Boston. "Yes, sir." "Well, I am wondering, because I hear an odd sort of hum as of a big city, but it is unlike any other." "Yes, sir, what you hear is the Bostonians reading Browning!"

Another story amused us: Allen loved to retell it. Ward Howe said that in his college days, when the lecturer's eye fell on an inattentive student, he would pounce upon him with a question to wake him up. On one occasion, a student had this put to him. "Mr. Smith, answer me this—To which of the two, prose or poetry, does the concurrent voice of antiquity assign the priority?" "I beg your pardon, Professor, but do I understand that you ask me, to which of the two, prose or poetry, does the concurrent voice of antiquity assign the priority?" "That is so, Mr. Smith." "Well, Professor, to which of the two, prose or poetry, the concurrent voice of antiquity assigns the priority, I don't know, and, sir, I don't care a damn!"

Meeting John Hay one afternoon, talk turned upon American humour, especially in its laconic essence, when he said, "The neatest example I can give you is of the man who took-in a lady to dinner, and on her telling him that she was a widow, he asked whether she was grass or sod?"

To return to Moncure Conway. In our last talk

together at the Savile Club he had much to say by way of criticism of Sir George Trevelyan's *American Revolution*. He thought that the book did insufficient justice to the British case and that time will bring some revision of the popular verdict on Washington. His view, he told me, was based on an intimate acquaintance with contemporary documents. I cite this as showing that his judgment had a power of detachment without which true focus of men and events is impossible. He abhorred war: he had seen the horrors of the battlefield when acting as correspondent of the *New York World* with the French army in the Franco-German struggle. He had long co-operated with the International League of Peace and Arbitration in Europe, and was disconcerted when, asking the support of Herbert Spencer to the movement, an unsympathetic reply came, Spencer prophesying [how the carnage of this Great War has justified it] that "there is a bad time coming and civilized mankind will (morally) be uncivilized before civilization can again advance," and therefore that the proposed movement "would be poohpoohed as sentimental and visionary."

"50 Rue de Richelieu, Paris,
"*August* 26, 1900.

"My dear Clodd,

"Thanks, thanks, thanks! The way in which Stead put the thing was such that I resolved to make another appeal to Spencer to lend the weight of his name to my schemes for arbitration, and began my letter by mentioning that I had heard that his reply to me two years ago was printed in your *Grant Allen*— to whom I supposed he had communicated it, as I had not. Spencer replied that he could not remember having

any communication with Grant Allen on the matter and having "looked through the book pretty completely," did not remember any reference to it.[1] This gave me a fright. Could I by any accident have allowed Spencer's letter to get out of my hands, and thus into print? So was I one of the many tormented, as Voltaire observed, by troubles that never arrive—until your letter came.

"As to my scheme for arbitration it has been worked out carefully, and is now under discussion of the leading peacemakers. It has been translated into French and German; but not yet printed. Before long I shall send you a copy.

"*Entre nous* I think our dear Herbert S. is showing his age. It is nothing but a kind of Scientific Calvinism to decline helping an effort for arbitration on the ground that 'we are in course of rebarbarization,' etc., etc. It is as bad as yielding to the majority. If natural selection is working for evil it is all the more necessary that the evolutionist shall introduce intelligent and purposed selection. For the rest my effort was not to get a court 'to pass opinions on international relations,' but to have every particular dispute between nations that threatens peace arbitrated by the most eminent and able men of all countries (save the disputants), these great men being of acknowledged competency and holding no office under their governments. The method of securing the consensus of the competent and unbiassed has been elaborated by me with care, and has fair prospect of being adopted by the Paris Congress which meets in Paris, September 30 and after.

"It may be that my plan will be found impracticable, nevertheless, amid all the deluge of blood I have found some comfort in devising my rainbow. At any rate

[1] Spencer overlooked it. It is given on p. 199.

we can find here and there an ark, but I fear that the arks will become fewer and smaller. Jingoism has invaded even South Place, and possibly the Omar Khayyám Club. O my lost countries.

"With affectionate farewell,

"MONCURE D. CONWAY."

But the enemy with whom he never made truce or terms was that obscurantism which in every field opposes its stolid front to progress and all that of spiritual and intellectual freedom is involved therein. In defence of that most sacred of causes he had endured much ere he came to England. His unwavering efforts to remove the curse of slavery from his native land had cost him dear. Slave-owners found their defenders in pulpits; preachers contending that slavery was an institution justified by Hebrew and Christian precedent. The line which they took was sarcastically expressed in Lowell's *Biglow Papers*.

"Ham's seed wuz g'in to us in chairge, an' shouldn't we be lible
In Kingdom Come, ef we kep' back their priv'lege in the Bible.
All things wuz g'in to man for's use, his sarvice an' delight;
An' don't the Greek an' Hebrew words that mean a Man mean White?
. . . . . .
When Satan sets himself to work to raise his very bes' muss,
He scatters roun' onscriptural views relatin' to Ones'mus."

After doing what was in his power to free the slave and after accomplishing his own spiritual liberty, bought with no mean price, Conway came to us as an exile. He found an abiding home in the land he loved so deeply; he found an abiding place in hearts stirred to noble impulses by what he had spoken and written, wherein truth was never subordinated by him to a fleeting rhetoric.

XX

Rev. Charles Voysey (1828–1914)

Among the happy chances spoken of as bringers of friendship was that through which I came into close relations with a man whose heresies, if they did not shake, at least perturbed, the Church at a time when the agitation caused by the publication of *Essays and Reviews* and *Ecce Homo* had well-nigh died away.

One day in the spring of 1871 a clerically-dressed gentleman called on me at the Bank and introduced himself as an old friend of our late manager, about whose family he asked for information. On his giving his name, I expressed pleasure at seeing him, adding some words which indicated agreement with his heresies. The Rev. Charles Voysey—that was his name—had just before then been deprived of the living—" passing rich on forty pounds a year "—of Healaugh in Yorkshire for denying the divinity of Jesus Christ. In his case, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council had no alternative but to confirm the decree of the Diocesan Court at York. Foreseeing that this was inevitable, he made plans for removing to London and starting what was called the Theistic Church, whose habitat for some time was St. George's Hall, Langham Place. There, occasionally, I " sat under " him; and, in other ways, our intercourse, socially, became frequent.

In the latter part of 1875 he came to me in a state of high excitement to tell me that a wealthy French noble,

Count de Montagu, a convert to Theism, had offered liberal support to the "cause," including, since the movement had no organ, the subsidy of a magazine the title of which Voysey suggested should be *The Langham*. "Will you contribute to it?" he asked. Of course, the answer was "in the affirmative" as they say in Parliament. The magazine was floated; its contributors duly paid, and there followed an invitation to the staff to meet the "pious founder Count" at dinner at Voysey's. There we assembled on March 16, 1876. The company, so far as I can remember, consisted of Professor F. W. Newman, brother of the Cardinal, Dr. George Wild, H. Baden Pritchard, R. Hope Moncrieff and one or two others whose names I cannot recall. The "Count's" absence from the reception room was explained by Voysey as due to lameness. Ushered into the dining-room, we defiled before our titled host and sat down to an excellent dinner. A year after that the "Count" disappeared. His story, put together with the help of my old friend Hope Moncrieff, is as follows—

The "Count's" real name was Benson. He was the son of a Jewish tradesman in Paris and a born rascal. He first gulled the British public by posing as the mayor of a French town burned by the Prussians in the Franco-German War of 1870. He induced a brother magnate—no less a personage than the Lord Mayor of London, to open a fund for the rebuilding of the town; he even made love to his daughter! But a short time passed before the rogue was found out: he was laid by the heels and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Newgate. There he set fire to his bed, whereby he was helplessly crippled. Regaining his freedom, he explained his lameness as due to a railway accident,

and was carried about by a "valet," one of the gang of swindlers concerned in what was to be known in criminal annals as the Great Turf Frauds. For the "Count de Montagu" was no other than Benson. In 1875, when he placed his purse at the disposal of Voysey, he was living in good style at Shanklin and had a house in Cavendish Square. He played the piano divinely; he became a social power, winning his entry into fashionable circles by entertaining lavishly. Interest in him was spread by the rumour that he was plotting the restoration of the Imperial dynasty. In 1877 Benson was arrested in connection with the turf frauds and sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment. Released, I don't know the precise date, he went to Mexico City, put up at a first-class hotel, and advertised himself as agent in advance of Madame Adelina Patti, who was announced to give a series of concerts there. He opened an office for the sale of tickets, raked-in a large sum, with which, on the eve of Patti's arrival, he fled to New York. Traced there, he was extradited and sent back to Mexico. He committed suicide by throwing himself over the stairs in his prison.

The reconciliation of his rascality throughout life with his allocation of a part of his stolen money to the service of God must be left to the expert in mental pathology. Benson's morals—if he can in any way be credited as possessing any—were on the plane of the Italian robbers who pray to the Madonna for success and promise her a share of the plunder.

Needless to say that none of us "in the know" ever mentioned the word "Count" in Voysey's hearing. My drifting from the Theistic creed, to which he adhered until death, did not mean any cooling of our friendship. He did me the service of preaching a sermon against

my *Jesus of Nazareth*, his charge against which was that it ignored the fact that the history of Christianity evidences that its influence for evil has been scarcely less than its influence for good. It is a somewhat rare experience to have written a book which was banned by a Theist, blessed by two Agnostics and which irritated Ruskin. Huxley's letter about it was given on p. 41. Here is George Eliot's—

"The Priory, North Bank, Regent's Park,
"*January* 4, 1880.

"Dear Sir,

"I am greatly obliged to you for sending me your book entitled *Jesus of Nazareth*, which I have read with much interest both in its purpose and in its execution. I hardly thought before that we had among us an author who could treat biblical subjects for the young with an entire freedom from the coaxing, dandling style, and from the rhetoric of the showman who describes his monstrous outside pictures not in the least resembling the creatures within.

"My mind cannot see the Gospel histories in just the same proportions as those you have given. But on this widely conjectural subject there may and must be shades of difference which do not affect fundamental agreement.

"Believe me,

"Yours faithfully,

"M. E. Lewes."

The three scolding letters from Ruskin were (after Bowdlerization) privately printed by that Mæcenas of bibliophiles, my friend Thomas Wise, and afterwards included in Sir E. T. Cook's edition of Ruskin's works. They were followed by a letter from his secretary asking

me not to take them too seriously, because Ruskin was suffering at the time from mental overstrain which rendered him especially off balance when dealing with religious subjects. Hence, this short extract from the last letter will here suffice.

"Your book makes me so angry every time I open it that I never can venture to write. Yet the anger is a strange phenomenon in one's own mind about a thing where no harm is meant. . . . How do you ever get on with Holman-Hunt? I thought he was more of a bigot than I—by much."

In contrast, here is a chaffy letter from Meredith—

"Box Hill,
"*November* 8, 1905.

"My dear Sir Reynard of the Alde, Admiral,

"Say Monday and give me pleasure. During my time of the swinging of the leg in its cathedral gaiters [1] I read your life of J. of N. and was impressed by the fairness and ability of it. The portrait for frontispiece in the place of J. of N. was very interesting.[2]

"Warmly yours,
"George Meredith."

[1] A bandaged, broken leg, through a fall over the threshold at Flint Cottage.

[2] The edition was one of the Rationalist Press reprints, in each of which a portrait of the author, without name attached, faces the title-page. Hence, when I next saw him, Meredith could not resist the humorous comment: "I never knew that J. of N. looked like that."

XXI

The Rev. Charles Anderson (1826–1893)
Samuel Butler (1835–1902)

Charles Anderson, an eccentric heterodox clergyman, was Vicar of St. John's, Limehouse. His homely little vicarage faced the gasworks, giving occasion to his bluff, hearty friend, the Rev. Harry Jones, to say to him on his appointment to the living that he hoped he would "diffuse more light and less stink" in that dolorous neighbourhood. He was in the habit of writing to authors whose books interested him and of seeking their acquaintance. That is how I came to know him, and, through him, George Gissing and Mrs. Lynn Linton. Without a soul in the parish who had anything intellectual in common with him, Anderson was thrown on his own resources and on such friendships as might come to him in the way named above. If he could not get a talk, then he relieved his tedium by writing letters, of which the following are samples. The first is dated five days after the death of Matthew Arnold, whom, as Inspector of Schools, he occasionally met.

"St. John's,
"*April* 20, 1888.

"Dear Clodd,

"Have you read or are you reading *Robert Elsmere?* The book is able and interesting, but the leading theory that East London (always East London) may be regenerated by a new religion, an agnostic theism—

is *twaddle*. This fighting the ground inch by inch to retain some fleeting dogma of deity is a losing battle all along the line. It will be far wiser to throw up and have done with it. A ghost of a ghost in the nature of things *lacks* substance. You know Mrs. H. W. is a niece of Matt's?

"I am re-reading Arnold's poems. It is a great thing for us that he lives as much as ever he did in his books. 'He being dead yet speaketh,' and with a new and even more touching ring in his voice as it sounds from the tomb. I have just finished Grant Allen's *Devil's Die*. It seems to me very sad that a man of his parts should have to earn his bread by writing second-class, highly sensational novels. Far better to make your 'tin' as, say, secretary of Joint Stock Mammon.

"What a funny world it is! Arnold lived to hate Gladstone and dies to be buried on Primrose Day.

"Ever yours,

"C. A."

The friendly relations between him and Matthew Arnold are shown in the following unpublished letter which Anderson gave me—

"Athenæum Club,
March 25, [1873].

"My dear Mr. Anderson,

"Thank you for your note; I always like to think of you as one of my readers.

"I received *Philochristus*, and learnt by enquiry of Farrar who the author was.[1] I looked through the book with interest, but the work seems to me to have the defect of being neither quite a work of art, nor quite a direct treatment of its subject, but something betwixt and between.

[1] The Rev. Dr. Abbott.

"We shall meet, I hope, at St. Anne's, in a few weeks time.

"Ever truly yours,

"MATTHEW ARNOLD.

"P.S.—Seeley's articles [1] are, as you say, signs of the times, but there, too, the treatment of the subject is not frank and direct enough."

"St. John's,
"*December* 30, 1888.

"DEAR C.,

"I have read Huxley's *Science and Morals*. It is in his best and cleverest manner and is *unanswerable*. But, when all is said, there remains this—Man regarded from the standpoint of a scientific freethinker, say, Huxley, is altogether a different being from man regarded from the standpoint of an orthodox Catholic, say, Newman.

What man is, what he will be, what is well for him, what is possible for him, all this gets quite another answer from these opposite attitudes of enquiry. Each system offers its own admixture of loss and gain. But we are no longer in the position of making choice. In the old days Catholicism was the inevitable belief. Now, scientific free thought is the inevitable. Unhappily, at the present moment we are firmly seated *nowhere*, but tend so far to fall between the two stools. We have neither the faith, poetry and moral force of the supernatural past, nor the sound logic, social axioms and easy fatalism of the scientific future.

"I am reading *Luck and Cunning*. It is a game of blindman's buff with the first principles of organic science. A metaphysician in a scientific laboratory is as mischievous as a bull in a china shop. All either does is to smash things up in rampant ignorance. Is

[1] Afterwards published under the title of *Natural Religion*.

Butler shamming when he professes not to understand Darwin, Spencer, Romanes, or is he stone blind through insatiable egotism? His endeavour to show Darwin up as a dishonest writer or one who twists words with nature to mislead is evidence that the one thing for him is a good sound birching to thrash the nonsense out of him.

"Ever yours,
"C. A."

Anderson took me occasionally to meetings of the Curates Clerical Club, known as the C.C.C. to distinguish it from the Clerical Club. But at that time, about 1875, it had belied its name, because all its members were either rectors or vicars.[1] They were a genial, interesting company. Among them were Harry Jones, Brooke Lambert, Llewellyn Davies, W. R. Fremantle, and John R. Green, the historian. It would not be doing any one of them justice to say what the churchwarden said of his parson who was a *bon vivant* but a poor preacher, that he was "better in the bottle than the wood." To recall their names is to recall prominent members of the Broad Church, which, with the help of the Essayists and Colenso, had won freedom of utterance for the clergy of the establishment, but which nowadays, has scarcely a representative left.

The Club and their guests were invited by Dean Stanley—the date was June 24, 1878—to the Deanery, when he read a paper on "Advances in Liberal Theology." I recall the occasion because one of the clergy present was under taboo for very advanced views. The

[1] John Jackson, who was then Bishop of London, had a large family of daughters. They were known as the Curates' Aid Society because the parsons who married them secured rapid promotion. Whether any of the members of the C.C.C. were among the fortunate husbands, I cannot say.

brave little Dean showed what he thought by giving him a seat on his right at the supper table.

Anderson's contributions to literature were in the harmless shape of two or three volumes of sermons, into which creed entered little and conduct much, and on which the dust of years now lies. He was a very good story-teller. When he was a curate somewhere in the Midlands, a district visitor came to him to say that she despaired of her work and must give it up. She gave this as the reason. " When I called on old Mrs. Brown, who, you know, sir, is dying of cancer, I tried to make her more resigned to her sufferings by reminding her that the Squire's lady has the same dreadful thing, and she might see that the rich are just like the poor in not being able to stave off disease, for all the money they have. Then she said to me, ' That's all very true, miss, but you see, her Ladyship ain't in that state of life as how she's got to come to be read to ! "

Anderson's move to London was to a curacy at St. Ann's, Soho, where he and Mr. Selwyn Image (now Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford) were colleagues. They have told me with gusto the story of a distinguished traveller and his wife who, on reaching the Holy Land, made their way to the river Jordan, whence they returned with a bottle of water from the sacred stream to be used at the christening of an expected baby. Duly corked and sealed, the bottle was kept till the day when the rite was to be administered to the new-born. Arrangements were perfected; the procession to the font in St. Ann's Church was headed by a manservant carrying the bottle, the precious contents of which Jeames poured into the font to the mystery of a gurgling sound. To the consternation of the party it was found that the plug had been left out, and recourse had to be

made to the secular water supplied by the New River Company!

Settled at the East End, Anderson, who had considerable taste in such matters, told me how impressed he was at the absence of any sense of the beautiful among the dock-labourers, carters and others ranked as the lower classes. Handsome young fellows would lead to the altar brides whose faces bore on the hideous, the bridegrooms apparently seeing in them types which to them may have had all the charms of Venus. Of course, the attraction of the female from the sexual standpoint explained the indifference of the male about her pug nose, mouth stretching from ear to ear, and wretched complexion; but it shows that the sense of the beautiful was wholly lacking, and so far suggests an interesting question on the evolution of the æsthetic faculty. But physical charms would not be looked for in the case of two septuagenarians who presented themselves before him for marriage. Anderson had as verger an old sailor who came with a sort of hangdog look to him one morning with the needless query, "You knows old Betty, sir?" [Betty was Anderson's charwoman.] "Well, sir, I know you'll laugh, but Betty and I are going to be spliced, and we wants you to splice us." Both bride and bridegroom were, as hinted above, past seventy. In due time they took their places before the altar. When the old man was called upon to repeat the words, "I take thee my wedded wife, to have and and to hold," he broke in: "Very true, sir, much *too old*, both on us, sir."

Somewhere about the 'eighties Anderson came to me on a matter which now and again troubles the clerical conscience. He said to me: "I have given up all belief in the Creeds and, as far as Agnosticism can be defined,

I am an Agnostic. I have only my income of £300 a year, and being a single man without any claims on me I spend more than two-thirds of it on the upkeep of the church, payment of the choir and the rest of it. That leaves me under £2 a week to live on, which I manage to do; so if I chuck the thing I am penniless; it will be a case of standing on the kerb outside your Bank with matches and bootlaces for sale. Now I ask you, as an old friend, what shall I do?"

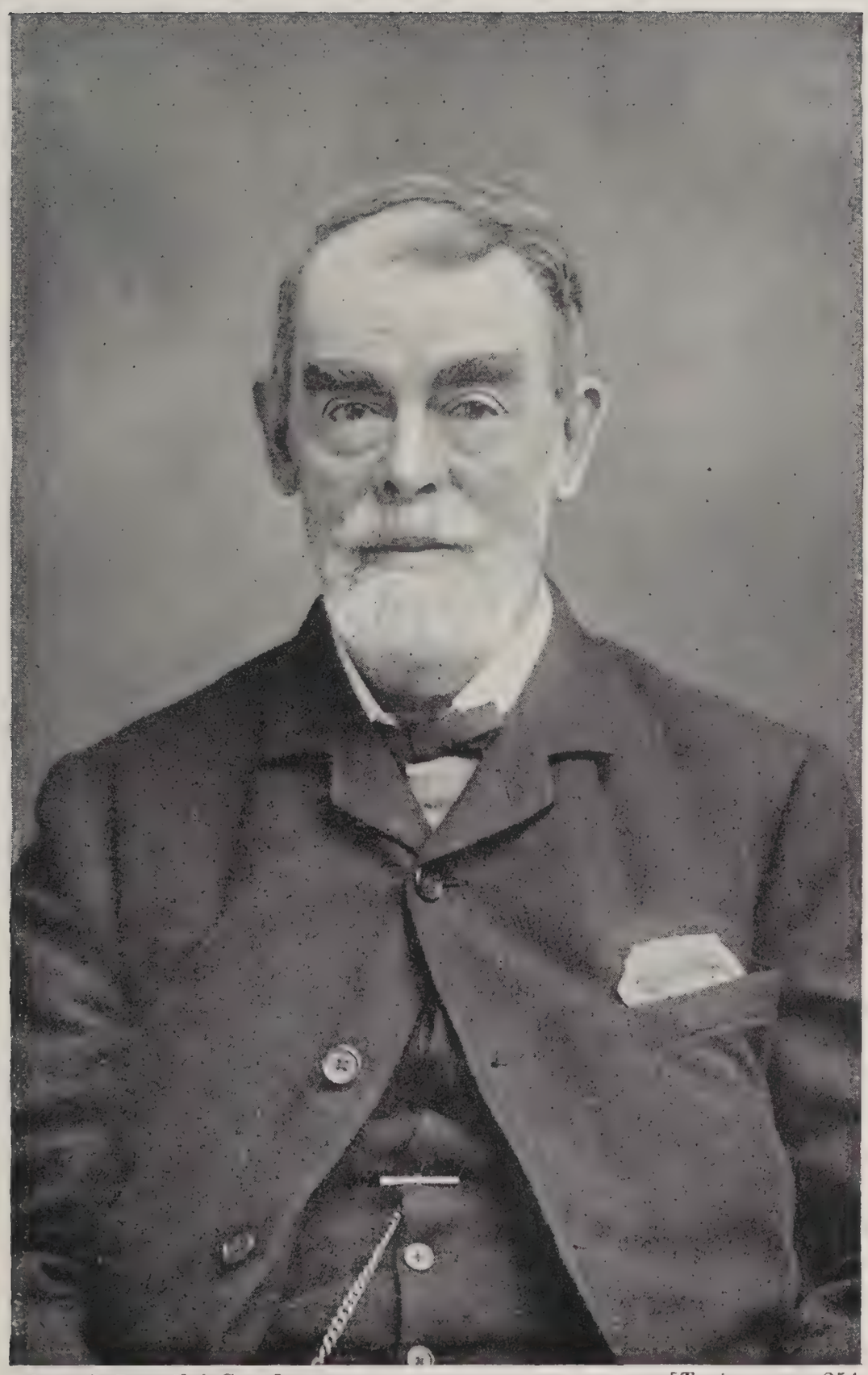
My answer was: "Stick to your job. I know what a lot of good work you are doing down there." I couldn't say otherwise, for what the devil was my poor old friend to do, and I did know all about his unselfish work in a dismal neighbourhood full of hopeless lives?

The question remains beset with difficulties, and can only be settled by the abolition of the preposterous demand made on men at a fluent period of life, when the emotions are excited into full play, to declare their unfeigned belief in what they afterwards discover to be false.[1]

Samuel Butler (1835–1902).

I bracket Anderson and Samuel Butler together for this quite flimsy reason. To Anderson, practically, is due the first publication of Samuel Butler's *Psalm of Montreal*. This was in the *Spectator* of May 18, 1878. I first met Butler at the Century Club, of which select body I had the honour to be elected a member in 1877. Professor Clifford and Sir E. B. Tylor were my sponsors.

[1] "If the clergy are bound down and the laity unbound; if the teacher may not seek the truth and the taught may, if the Church puts the Bible in the hand of one as a living spirit and in the hand of the other as a dead letter—what is to come of it? I *love* the Church of England. But what is to become of such a monstrous system, such a Godless lie as this?"—*Letters of* (the then Rev.) *John Richard Green*, p. 110.



Photo, J. Russell & Sons.] [*To face page* 254.

Believe me
Yr very truly
S. Butler

The Club, heretical though it was, had one feature in common with the primitive Christians; namely, that it met in an upper room. This was every Sunday and Wednesday at eight o'clock at its quarters, 6, Pall Mall Place, for purposes wholly convivial. Along one side of the room there was a long table on which were spread churchwarden pipes, tobacco and cigarettes, whiskey, brandy and mineral waters. The subscription was one guinea a year, inclusive of smokes and drinks, consequently those who did not come to the Club paid for those who did. Under Rule XI no newspapers, books, cards or dice were permitted in the Club room. Our one annual frivolity was an invitation to ladies to an oyster soirée. Dropping-in about nine o'clock, one was certain of a free and easy chat with Lewis Morris, author of the once popular *Epic of Hades* (also known as the *Hades of an Epic*); with Samuel Butler and Lionel Robinson (our honorary secretary), as standing dishes. Its members included Walter Bagehot, W. K. Clifford, Henry Fawcett, David Masson, Admiral Maxse (the hero of *Beauchamp's Career*), Goldwin Smith, the two Stephens — Fitzjames and Leslie — John Tyndall and Sir E. B. Tylor—these were occasionally in evidence. The Club came to an end in 1881. It died of inanition; the novelty of arriving late at night, and staying till the small hours, wore off, and there were defections among the single members who " kept not their first estate," and were haunted by fears of curtain lectures. From its ashes rose that giant caravanserai of Liberalism, the National Liberal Club.

On the first Sunday evening in March 1878 Butler and I were early arrivals, and after talking freely about his colonial experiences, he recited to me the *Psalm of Montreal.* I begged him to give me a copy,

which I read to Anderson, who said, "Matt. Arnold is coming to inspect my school next week, do let me show it to him." He read it, and said he should like Hutton, the editor of the *Spectator*, to see it. Thus it came about that, with Butler's consent, the poem appeared in that orthodox paper.

Butler spoke to me more than once of a novel which he had on the stocks, adding that it could not be published during the lifetime of his father, because he was one of the chief characters. This was the remarkable *Way of all Flesh*, which was posthumous. He was, for a time, not an infrequent visitor at my house on Sunday evenings and I recall the pleasure which he expressed in meeting Grant Allen and Richard Proctor. But after his deplorable attack on Darwin in *Unconscious Memory*, published in 1880, he became a man with a grievance. Unfortunately he nursed the delusion that every man of science if he defended Darwin was in conspiracy against himself and this made that freedom which is the charm of intercourse very difficult. The matter is one for deeper regret because a pamphlet entitled *Charles Darwin and Samuel Butler, a Step towards Reconciliation*, published since Butler's death, shows that his charge against Darwin was based on a misunderstanding. In his *Life and Habit*, published in 1877, he had paid this tribute, "I owe it to Mr. Darwin that I believe in evolution at all."

Characteristic of a man of singularly original power, whose company was always entertaining, is the following letter about that book.

"15, Clifford's Inn, E.C.,
"*January* 2, 1878.

"Dear Mr. Clodd,

"Thank you very much for sending me your friend's[1] notes on *Life and Habit*. It is very good of him to like

[1] Rev. Charles Anderson.

my book. I wanted it to please people and if there was anything in it they had a fancy to, to keep it and set it straight for themselves. Of course I knew I should not be *en règle*, but such as I am I must be myself and travel by lanes rather than highways, or I had better shut up shop at once. So long as your friend is pleased with the book in spite of its errors and shortcomings, I am satisfied. Of course if I had seen Clifford and G. H. Lewes's books referred to, I should have said so, but in these days one cannot consider it likely that one is going to say anything new and makes sure that one will run up against some one else and simply goes ahead: If any one thinks I have taken any of their property they shall have it back whether it is theirs or no; on the first chance I get of saying that they said it before me I will call attention to their having said it: this is the only system on which one can keep a quiet mind. I think of writing an article on the supreme happiness of having no breeches; besides, living people can take care of themselves, but if I catch any one robbing the dead, especially the dead that have fallen honourably in battle, poor and neglected in their own day, after having borne its burden and heat, I will rob them of every stitch of clothing they have on their backs, so far as the law will allow me.

"Believe me,
"Yours truly,
S. Butler."

Butler was of the *genus irritabile;* hence, too apt to resent adverse criticism, even when, as in the example given in the following letter, its honesty cannot be challenged.

"Wilderhope House, Shrewsbury,
"*March* 26 [year ?].

"DEAR MR. CLODD,

"Your kind letter has been forwarded to me here where I am staying—at my father's house. I shall not be back till Saturday evening and cannot therefore dine with you at the Savile. I will meet you there say at 9 o'clock—not to dine—but to smoke a cigarette and have a chat. The *Athenæum* has been a very great lift to me and given me much encouragement; really I was beginning to think I had no chance, no matter what I did. Even more encouraging than the *Athenæum* itself is the fact that Romanes & Co. are taking the line which I have insisted upon, in company with others, for so long—for after all it is the theory and not the person which is the thing to be thought of.

"I have a quarrel with Grant Allen, so you will not find him an ally of mine. I did not like his heading off the reviews of *Evolution, Old and New*, with two reviews on the same day: one in the *Academy* and one in the *Examiner*—both very unfair ones—one signed and the other not. Grant Allen is an author himself and must know what hard work we find it to make the two ends meet; and he should not have misrepresented me as grossly as he did. However, it doesn't matter. The editor of the *Examiner* told me, much against my will, and, indeed, against my strongly expressed wish not to know—who it was that had written the article, and under these circumstances I have more than once in my books [referred] to the article as Grant Allen's, which, under any other, of course, I should not have done.[1]

[1] See Appendix to second edition of *Evolution, Old and New*, 1882, and to reprint, 1911. Also *Luck or Cunning*, Chap. XVI, "Mr. Grant Allen's Charles Darwin." 1887.

"I think the formation of a structure is as much an instinct as the making of a nest. Von Hartmann is very sound upon this point, though not in any part that I have translated. Of course, if this is not so, the whole theory falls to pieces, and I think it explains too much not to be substantially sound. With many thanks for your kindness in writing,

"Believe me,

"Yours very truly,

"S. BUTLER."

The varied matters dealt with in the following letters warrant their inclusion here.

"15, Clifford's Inn, Fleet St., E.C.
"*October* 2 [1878 ?].

"DEAR SIR,

"I have to thank you for lending me Mivart's book.[1] It is of the greatest possible use to me all through. May I keep it yet longer? I blush to say that I have not yet read your books and can only hope that you have not read mine—if so I shall feel easier in my mind, but I assure you I am very busy, I intend however, going down into the country next week to finish my book and shall take yours with me.

"Can you tell me whether Darwin ever answered Mivart,[2] or might I without impropriety send a note to Mivart himself and ask him when and where his book was answered, if at all?

"Yours truly,

"S. BUTLER."

[1] The reference is to Professor St. George Mivart's *Genesis of Species* (1871).

[2] In a letter to Wallace, dated July 9, 1871, Darwin says: "I am now at work at a new and cheap edition of the *Origin*, and shall answer several points in Mivart's book."—*Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, Vol. III. p. 144.

"15, Clifford's Inn, E.C.,
"*May* 5, 1879.

"DEAR MR. CLODD,

"I enclose review in Nature. I have heard this morning that Huxley does not like *Life and Habit*—on asking the grounds I was told he said that I had not the grasp of science which would enable me to deal with such questions satisfactorily. What nonsense! The matter is one which any barrister or business man can judge of just as well as Huxley himself. Besides, how is it that though the scientists are very ready with such general remarks as this I cannot get chapter and verse for a single blunder from any one of them? No one would be more heartily obliged to them than I if they would only say, 'You have maintained so and so, now this cannot be for such and such a reason.' But from no single source have any such attempts reached me. I am beginning to have a strong suspicion that the task of doing so is not found too easy.

"Yours very truly,
"S. BUTLER."

"15, Clifford's Inn, E.C.,
[*Undated*].

"I return Huxley's *Lay Sermons* after reading "The physical basis of life" with much interest. I am bothered by § at top of p. 80. "Let water, carbonic acid, etc." This should be a further simplification of what has immediately preceded and I cannot make it out to be so, nor quite understand what is meant; nor do I catch the difference between protein and protoplasm, p. 75. Also I fail to see, rather, somewhat protest against the attempt to make out that he is not a materialist—in fact the last 8, or 10 pp.

seem to me rather like the sort of thing you tell me he condemns in Fred. Harrison, but I was very much interested in the essay and shall be able I hope to profit by it.

"I have not yet been to Dr. Williams's library—I have been to the Museum every day till 1, but shall go soon.

"I venture to send you along with this one of the many unsold copies I have of *The Fair Haven* in the hope that the first 25 pp. of the introductory memoir may amuse you.

"I send you what is called the 1st edn., *i. e.* without the preface, because it is better without it—the preface being written without due thought and in fact a mistake.

"I am,
"Yours faithfully,
"S. BUTLER."

"15, Clifford's Inn, E.C.,
"*September* 18 [year ?].

"Let me beg of you not to give me a copy of your book. There is all the difference between a book which sells and a book which does not sell. I am only too thankful to find any one who will accept a copy which otherwise lies and will lie on a bookseller's shelf for ever so far as I can see. I have borrowed your book from a friend—or rather a friend has promised to lend it me or if you like to lend me a copy of it would give me pleasure, but I would ask you to let this be the extent to which I am to be your debtor in this particular matter.

"If you know any one else who you think would like a *Fair Haven* he can have it, at any time—strictly speaking, I ought to pay any one for taking it—as I want to get rid of them.

"Thank you for your explanation *re* Huxley. I will be at Dr. Williams's library about 3 o'clock on Wednesday.

"As regards the particular line taken in the *Fair Haven* concerning the Resurrection—in opposition to Strauss—I should be very sorry to say that I held with it—but if I could with tolerable certainty from a Johannian source for the account of the Res^{n} given in the 4th gospel I think I *should*. But one can't.

"Believe me,

"Yours faithfully,

"S. Butler."

To the new reset edition of the *Fair Haven*, Mr. R. A. Streatfeild contributes an Introduction in which he says that that ironical work was misunderstood, not only by reviewers, some of whom greeted it solemnly as a defence of orthodoxy, but by divines of high standing, such as the late Canon Ainger, who sent it to a friend whom he wished to convert. This was more than Butler could resist, and he hastened to issue a second edition bearing his name and accompanied by a preface (given in the present reprint) in which the deceived elect were held up to ridicule. (p. xi.)

Butler castigated the stupidity which construed the arguments in that book into a defence of Christianity, and, certainly, he had warrant when such a Gibbonian sentence as this could thus be interpreted: "He," [that is, John Pickard Owen, the supposititious author of the book] "stood alone as recognizing the wisdom of the Divine Counsels in having ordained the wide and apparently inconceivable divergencies of doctrine and character which we find assigned to Christ in the Gospels, and as finding his faith confirmed, not by the supposition that both the portraits drawn of Christ are objectively

true, but *that both are objectively inaccurate and that the Almighty intended they should be inaccurate*," etc. (p. 23, 1913 edition).

And yet when Butler wrote *Life and Habit* as a serious contribution to the doctrine of Evolution, he resented the attitude of the readers of *Erewhon* and the *Fair Haven*, when he was asked "Where was the joke?" And the more he protested "that there was no joke," the more did his readers laugh and say, "Oh no, we're not such fools as all that, we know it's your fun."

As Chauncey Depew said: "When once you've stood on your head, the public won't let you stand on your feet." The truth of this was Butler's irritating experience.

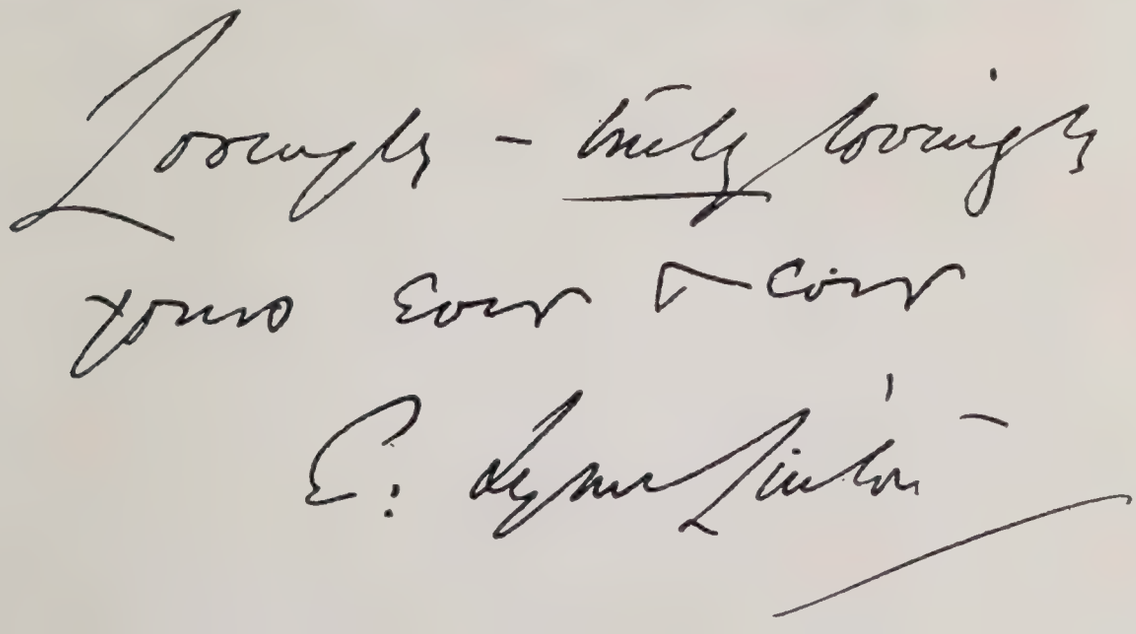
XXII

Eliza Lynn Linton (1822–1898)

It was at Hayter House, Marylebone Road, that I first met Mrs. Lynn Linton. Charles Anderson took me there. For some years after that she lived much abroad, chiefly in Italy; hence we met rarely. But in the spring of 1883, I went to Rome and put up at the Hôtel d'Italia, where she was staying, with the result that we became close friends, and, during her absences from England, constant correspondents. Her letters were full of the affection which she lavished on those for whom she cared.

A warmer-hearted, braver, more chivalrous, and candour must add, less discreet, woman, never lived. She loved and hated "not at all or all in all," and in those unsubdued emotions lay the cause of misconceptions about her, begotten among those who knew her only as a writer saying in plain English what she meant. By such persons this dear woman, who was more heart than head when pouring out what grieved her soul; this dear woman who looked, what she was, all tenderness, winning you by the softness of her voice and the sweetness of her smile, was denounced as a virago and a scold. True champion of freer life for her sex, she brought on herself torrents of misrepresentation and abuse by her articles on the Woman Question, notablest among which was one on the "Girl of the Period" in the *Saturday Review* of March 14,

Photo, Elliott & Fry.] [*To face page* 264.



1868. The " Shrieking Sisterhood," who, to quote from Sir Walter Besant's poem on her after her death—

> " Made them masks of men and fondly thought
> Like men to do, to stand where men have stood,"

raised " hue and cry " after a woman whose crime was insistence on the immutable distinction of sex as sufficing condemnation of movements fatuously striving to ignore that distinction, to the imperilment of the primal duty of motherhood. Concerning this, Mrs. Lynn Linton's views were of the freest and widest. She was not of " the thousands who are afraid of God, but more of Mrs. Grundy." And her contention was that the education of girls should be such as would best qualify them to become the comrades and helpers of men, not their competitors; as she said, " not their bad or inferior copies."

She was a very accomplished woman. The youngest of twelve, she had a motherless childhood, while a somewhat erratic father (he was Vicar of Crosthwaite and, it is interesting to note, was the owner of Gadshill, which was sold, after his death, to Charles Dickens) did not make for the comfort of the bereaved family. Thrown on her own resources, she taught herself French, German, Italian and Spanish, adding a smattering of Latin and Greek. All her life she pursued knowledge: she said to me, " I have never left school." To her is applicable what Plutarch says of Solon—

" For sure he was very desirous of knowledge as appeareth manifestly, for that being now old, he commonly used to say this verse—

> ' I grow old learning still.' " [1]

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[1] *Plutarch's Letters*, Solon, Vol. I. pp. 284, 340 (Temple Classics).

At the age of twenty-three she settled in London, starting on her long career as novelist, essayist and journalist. Her second book, *Amymone*, a romance of the age of Pericles, won the praise and secured for her the lifelong friendship of Walter Savage Landor: her "dear and glorious old father," as Swinburne spoke of him in a letter to her. For "father" and "daughter" they respectively called each other. On my shelves, among the books which Mrs. Lynn Linton bequeathed to me, stands Landor's *The Last Fruit off an Old Tree*, thus inscribed—

"To Eliza Lynn, from her affectionate old friend, W. S. Landor, March 5, 1854."

Facing the Preface is the arrogant, moving quatrain—

> "I strove with none, for none was worth my strife:
> Nature I loved, and, next to Nature, Art,
> I warmed both hands before the fire of life;
> It sinks, and I am ready to depart."

It was written on his seventy-fifth birthday, at Bath, where Eliza Lynn (as she then was) was staying with him. She told me what Mr. Layard has set down, also from her lips, in his biography of her.

"At breakfast he would not touch his food until he had scrawled off the lines. Then he read them with such exquisite pathos, such touching dignity and manly resignation, that she fell to weeping." [1]

The discoveries of modern science keenly interested her eager soul. No small tribute to her competency in mastery of these discoveries, as also of their significance, was paid her by Herbert Spencer. When the late Professor Drummond published his *Ascent of Man*—one of

[1] *Mrs. Lynn Linton: Her Life, Letters and Opinions*, by G. S. Layard, p. 70. As I had, through pressure of other work, to decline an invitation to write Mrs. Lynn Linton's biography, I was glad that this was undertaken by Mr. Layard, who, although he knew her only six years before her death, has given an adequate portrayal of a noble woman.

a class of hybrid books which sought to square the fundamental tenets of Christianity with the doctrine of Evolution, he suggested to her that she should write an article on it. This appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* of September 1894, and received his warm approval. Yet, with the zeal that compasses "sea and land to make one proselyte," the Spiritualists had claimed her as a believer in the genuineness of the frauds of mediums. What her attitude to this travesty of the Unknown was can be gathered from the following letter to me, written October 14, 1895.

"Malvern House, Great Malvern.

"My dear, I ordered and have got and read *Isis very much Unveiled*.[1] To think that such men as Professor Crookes and the like are taken in by these transparent humbugs and trickeries to the extent of believing in new unexplored and uncatalogued forces! It is astounding! I remember the portraits (?) spoken of, as painted by a Russian artist, a Mr. Lehmilchan. They were in his studio, with special light thrown on them. One was a Master of 90, looking like 50; one of 60, looking like 35. What rubbish! The man had never seen them and painted only from description and I think he said (spirit?) photographs.

"Are there any new books to read? . . . I have not found my house yet, or, rather, the one I want is in abeyance, but I hope to settle finally and permanently.

"Good-bye, dear and good,

"Lovingly yours,

"E. Lynn Linton.

"P.S.—Such a dear, kind letter from blessed Dr. Bird and dear Lallah [Dr. Bird's sister]."

[2] By Edmund Garrett. The book was an exposure of Madame Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*.

At her flat in Queen Anne's Mansions, her home for eleven years, there gathered men and women of varied interests. What those meetings recalled to him—unconsciously reflecting the feelings of others—is expressed by Henry James in this extract from a letter written at the Hôtel du Sud, Florence, February 7, 1887, to Mrs. Lynn Linton.

"I am sitting by the yellow Arno, and having literally to shut out the dazzling southern sunshine; yet my imagination takes flight on the wings of regret to the cosy sky-parlour from which you look down on the fogs and towers of Westminster, and I feel that I am losing all kinds of pleasant things."

The "Lynn Linton Correspondence," from which I quote the above, and which, somehow, after her death, was offered for sale by Henry Sotheran & Co., revealed the largeness of the circle in which she had moved. Alfred Austin heads the list and Edmund Yates ends it; scarcely a letter in the alphabet of authors is missing! The finger can point to the name of only one writer with whom Mrs. Lynn Linton's relations were not cordial—George Eliot.[1] This was not, I can aver, due to any professional jealousy: Mrs. Lynn Linton was incapable of that. She spoke of George Eliot as her intellectual superior. But, hating shams and snobbery, she was angry with the "Society" crowd that fawned at the feet of a woman living with a married

[1] "It was at John Chapman's [publisher of the *Westminster Review*] that I first met George Eliot—then Marian Evans, having neither her pseudonym nor her style and title of George Lewes's wife." (*My Literary Life*. By E. Lynn Linton, p. 94. Posthumously published, 1899.) "To me—[Chapman] was more antipathetic than any man I have ever known" (*Layard*, p. 251).

man because of her eminence in literature. In a letter to Herbert Spencer she says: "There were people who worshipped these two [George Henry Lewes and Mary Ann Evans] who cut me because I separated from Mr. Linton and who would have held Thornton Hunt [he went off with Mrs. Lewes] good for stoning. . . . Had Miss Evans been exactly the woman she was, and not the authoress she was, she would have been left in the shade by all those who sought her in the sunlight."

The tragic blunder of Mrs. Lynn Linton's life—due to emotions getting the better of judgment; she was in her thirty-sixth year—was her marriage to W. J. Linton: a clever craftsman and writer, but a feckless, muddle-headed enthusiast, possessing, it would seem, a certain charm for a woman nurturing ideals. Her ruling motive for marrying him was to give effect to the pleadings of his dying wife, whom she had self-sacrificingly nursed, to look after her children. For nine years Mrs. Lynn Linton kept the home together, giving of her strength, time and money. But life with such a husband became more and more impossible, and, after nine mismated years together, the two parted: he emigrating to America with his family, to remain more or less dependent on his wife's bounty until his death in 1897, at the age of eighty-five.

Very inadequately have I availed myself of this opportunity to obey the behest to me conveyed in a letter dated January 1, 1890: "When I die I should like you to write a little line for me and put me right in some parts of my character so misunderstood now." As she says in *Joshua Davidson*, "Characters are crucified, if men are not."

XXIII

Dr. George Bird (1817–1900). Sir Richard (1821–1890) and Lady Burton (1831–1896). Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson (1828–1896). Paul Blouët (Max O'Rell) (1848–1903). George Washington Cable (born 1844). L. F. Austin (1852–1905).

Dr. George Bird (1817–1900).

Few have heard of, fewer still survive who knew, Dr. Bird, truly the " beloved physician " of Sir Richard Burton, Leigh Hunt, Swinburne and others less distinguished. What wealth of gossip he poured forth about these men—gossip unrecorded. Only a story or two does memory hold. One is of Swinburne, unsteady of gait through drink, grumbling, as he was helped into a hansom, that the step was made so high ! Another is of Burton who, complimenting a young lady on her beauty as that of Helen of Troy, was asked by her " where Helen lived ? " She was not as versed in classic lore as the very stout lady who, after much thought as to what character she should represent at a fancy-dress ball, told her husband that she had decided to go as Helen of *Troy*, whereupon the ungallant spouse suggested that she should go as Helen of *Avoir-du-pois*.

Sitting " under the spreading chestnut-tree," *Punch* recently illustrated a story which Bird told me about Burton, *apropos* of his pilgrimage in disguise to the sacred shrine at Mecca. Detected, through some blunder in ritual, he would have been killed by a

fanatical Moslem, but "getting there first," killed him. "And how did you feel when you had killed a fellow creature?" asked Bird. "All right—and *you?*" retorted Burton.

Sir Richard (1821–1890) and Lady Burton (1831–1896).

It was from Dr. Bird's house, 49, Welbeck Street, that Richard Burton and Isabel Arundell took their nuptial flight. I met Burton (then Sir Richard) at meetings of the Anthropological and Folk Lore Societies, but had no talks worth recording with him, because these bore on the papers read at those gatherings. But his amazing, dare-devil career has had more than one narrator. I saw more of his voluble, excitable widow at the time when she was living in apartments in Baker Street. To a fanaticism unusual even among Catholics she added what that Church bans—belief in spiritualism. One afternoon, after general talk, she suddenly exclaimed, "Richard has heard all we've been saying," which brought the blood to my cheeks, only to recede when I recalled that nothing had passed in the conversation to bring a blush to the cheek of a bishop.

Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson (1828–1896).

It was at a meeting of "Our" Club, which I was told is the lineal descendant of the "Forty Thieves" Club, a rendezvous of Dickens, Jerrold and other men of letters, that I was introduced to Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson by an old friend, Professor David E. Hughes (d. 1900), who is, perhaps, best remembered as the inventor of the microphone, an instrument which does for faint sounds what the microscope does in revealing objects beyond unaided vision. For this and other inven-

tions (he was one of the pioneers in wireless telegraphy) Hughes received decorations so numerous that they covered his breast and his back, reminding me of what the late Sir Robert Hart said to me, that if he put on all *his* orders he would look like a Christmas tree! Hughes promised me a jolly evening at "Ours," but as the talk was led by one Colonel Heywood (or Haywood), Chief of the City Police, on the number of murderers whom he had seen hanged, and on gruesome details of their crimes, the evening was not an hilarious one!

To Richardson, who, by the way, scoffed at the germ theory of disease, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a fanatical teetotaler, bequeathed an ancestral cellar of wines for experimental purposes. None of us could induce Richardson to give us samples for *our* experiment! Of its ultimate fate I know nothing. He was a born raconteur, and, therefore, a welcome guest at Whitsuntide. I recall two of his stories, both of them about specialists. One of them was summoned from Edinburgh to the bedside of a lady who (for the concealment of the real name) shall be called Lady Strangeways. After leaving her, duty took him to a house some distance from Strangeways Castle to see another patient, who spoke more than once of "My husband, Lord Strangeways." "Excuse me, madam," said the doctor, "I have been attending Lady Strangeways at the Castle." "Oh," she replied, "that's the hussy who goes about with him in public. I'm his lordship's private wife."

Of another specialist friend he told this story. He had been suddenly summoned by a Scotch millionaire whose death by tetanus was imminent. He put the jaw right, and naming his fee, was offered one half of

the sum by the patient. Without haggling, he relocked the jaw, and told the man that his fee was now doubled, and he would be a dead 'un in a few minutes if he didn't pay up.

Paul Blouët (Max O'Rell) (1848–1903).

Paul Blouët, better known as Max O'Rell, had stories to tell of his soldier career in the Franco-German War which I have wholly forgotten. Suffice it that the seeds of disease, brought on by manifold privations, were then sown, making him incapable of bearing the strain imposed by lecturing tours and resulting in his death at the age of fifty-five.

"8, Acacia Road, London, N.W.
"*March* 27.

"My Dear Clodd,

"Like most preachers, I have not practised what I preached.

"I preached the gospel of cheerfulness. I told my hearers that to be cheerful and happy, one must be moderate in everything. And you should have heard and seen me when I exclaimed: 'What's the use to gain the whole world and make your wife a widow!' Humbug! The whole time I was allowing a manager to book *actually 156* lectures for me during the season 1897–98.

"My health and strength broke down. Then I caught a cold, which would have been nothing had I been well and strong when I caught it, but which in the state I was in, turned to a catarrh of the stomach. And, alas, I have no under-secretary of state, no understudy to take my place, so I go on—and have now to give three more lectures. Then, by doctor's orders, I must go to Bournemouth for complete rest—so I shall

not be able to go to you on April 3rd. Yes, it seems an awful long time since we saw you. In June and July I am going to take it very easy, and both my wife and I shall look forward to seeing a good deal of you, at your hospitable house and here—and many times, we hope, to make up for long absence.

" Believe me, my dear Clodd,

" Yours very sincerely,

" Paul Blouët."

Among his Irish stories (related, with pardonable " inexactitude," as in his own experiences) was the chestnut of the Jarvey who, telling his inquiring fare that the statues outside the Dublin post office were those of the Apostles, replied, in answer to the comment that there were only three of them, " Sure, yer honner wouldn't want thim all out at once; the rest are inside sartin' letthers." The other was new to me. Driven round Dublin some years after the Fenian agitation of 1867 the Jarvey told Blouët of the companies of men who both in that city and in Cork were waiting with swords ready to leap from their sheaths and guns ready to be shouldered. And when he asked why they didn't rise, the reply was, " Sor, the police won't let 'em." Travelling in Australia, and leaving the town where he had lectured the next morning, there were two miners in the carriage who didn't recognize him. Says one to his mate, " Did you hear that chap Max O'Rell last night? " " Not me, do you think I'd waste my money on a . . . bloke speaking broken English? "

George Washington Cable (born 1844).

In his *Diversions of a Naturalist* my old friend—in biological teaching, next to Huxley, my master—Sir

Ray Lankester, speaking of a Whitsuntide party at Aldeburgh in 1898, tells in his delightful way how George W. Cable, author of *Old Creole Days* and other charmingly vivid presentments of life in the Southern States, filled his pockets with rolled pebbles from the beach, naively asking whether they had not been put there by the hotel keepers " to make a promenade for the visitors ! " It was Cable's first visit to England and it was a privilege to ask him—especially as a fellow countryman of valued old guests, Moncure Conway and Dr. George Haven Putnam—to meet men as varied and distinguished in their several walks of life as Sir Ray Lankester, Sir Frederick Pollock, Sir George Scott Robertson, Clement Shorter and George Whale. We took him down the river to Orford Castle, in the *Lotus*, and as the others did not care to climb the stairs up which they had toiled in previous years, I piloted him to the top. The view from the ancient keep—all that remains of a fine Norman fortress—impressed him, but more than this, the wild flowers blossoming on the time-worn walls, and he said to me, " You'll think me weak, but you know this is the first time I've seen a castle, and I feel as if I should like to steal into a corner, and just sit down and cry." Two days after that, the party went to Framlingham to see the exquisitely sculptured tombs of the Norfolk family in the church, and to roam inside the once majestic castle, now enclosing an empty space, at that time of the year, full of buttercups and daisies. Again impressed by the unfamiliar scene, Cable gathered some of these homely flowers to send to his children. The only orthodox member of the party, moreover, the incarnation of modesty and simplicity, he charmed us all. His sense of humour was buffer to any shock delivered in fireside

licence of speech. I recall a Limerick by Sir Frederick Pollock—

"There was an old person of Barking
Who tired of this world's care and carking.
When they said, 'God is just';
He replied, 'I mistrust
That Examiner's system of marking.'"

Cable just smiled, and turned the current talk by reciting—

"There was a young lady named Perkins
Who just simply doted on gherkins,
She ate such large numbers
Of unripe cucumbers
As pickled her internal workin's."

Which of the party was it who capped this with

"There was an old man of Tarentum
Who sat on his false teeth and bent 'em:
When they said, 'You have lost
What must much have you cost;'
'Oh, no,' he replied, 'I was lent 'em.'"

On the day that the party broke up, Cable left, besides a sunny memory, this quatrain in my copy of *Old Creole Days*—

"To Edward Clodd.
"To find fair pictures added to a favourite book
Is with new friends to meet upon an old highway;
To have bright dreams while drowsing in a leafy nook,
Or blue skies, or good news, upon a holiday!"

L. F. Austin (1852–1905).

Who among Omarian diners can forget with what Elia-like humour L. F. Austin, time after time, proposed the toast of the guests? Here is an unpublished poem which he wrote in my copy of Andrew Lang's *Letters to Dead Authors*.

THE BALLAD OF ANDREW LANG

"I keep quite a classical Court,
I'm great on the study of Greek;
And yet on a fashion or sport
I gaily descant for a week.
Believe me, no log-rolling clique
Has ever exalted my horn,
Nor rival asserted in pique,
I touch what I do not adorn.

From Homer to Haggard I roam
Cementing incongruous spheres,
You'll find me serenely at home
In golf or in quaint Elzevirs.
I compliment Dickens on Squeers—
His mirth was a sickle in corn—
But when he would move us to tears
He touched what he did not adorn.

Methinks the illustrious dead
Are truly enchanted to see
My manners so perfectly bred
That Thackeray's 'Mister' to me.
And when my own weird I must dree;
And pass from life's radiant morn,
The voice of the Shades will not be—
I touched what I did not adorn.

ENVOY

Old friend, as you list to my lay
Your brows are not writhing with scorn,
For none who have known me can say—
I touch what I do not adorn."

In their literary skill, their quick adaptability and their gift of allusiveness drawn from wide reading, the two writers had much in common. Of this Austin supplies proof in his *At Random*, a volume of essays dear to the lover of light literature. He who playfully wrote therein "On the Art of Not Growing Old" died in his fifty-third year.

XXIV

Professor A. Van Millingen (1840–1915)

The announcement of the death of Alexander Van Millingen in September last would convey little to the world at large, since his work lay in Constantinople and his visits here were rare. But to those who had the privilege of his friendship their lives are the poorer in his loss; the stock of sweetness on which they could draw is lessened. I knew him through the good offices of my friend Mrs. Holman-Hunt's nephew, Consul Waugh, who, on my first visit to Constantinople, in 1906, made me free of a delightful club and introduced me to leading English residents there, to whom, for their generous hospitality, my debt remains, and must remain, unpaid. I was fortunate in the friendships thus made. The Rev. Robert Frew, than whom none knew their history better, piloted me round the wonderful, battered walls, concerning which Byron wrote to his mother: "I have seen the ruins of Athens, Ephesus and Delphi. I have traversed a great part of Turkey, of Asia and of Europe, but I never beheld a work of nature or of art which yielded an impression like the prospect of the walls of Constantinople from the end of the Golden Horn to the Seven Towers." Mr. Frew won the hearts of the Turks during the war with Italy in the service which he rendered to the cholera-stricken troops. At the outbreak of the present war, he was permitted to remain in Constantinople, but the ingrates

searched his house and carried off fifteen years stock of sermons! They were subsequently restored: I have hesitated whether to send him condolence or congratulation.

I must relate a small adventure which his help carried to successful issue. Through Consul Waugh's kindness, my name was sent in as a person reputable enough to view the ceremony of the Selamlik, *i. e.* the weekly procession of the Sultan from the Yildiz Kiosk to the mosque within the palace grounds. Telling Frew of my luck, he said, "You know, it's a sort of levee, and you must go in frock coat and top hat." I told him that I had brought neither. "Well," he said, "your dark serge suit may pass, but the hat is *de rigueur*. You had better see if mine fits you." I did, and it covered my eyes! But I borrowed it, and the next morning, when I arrived at the palace gates, avoided betrayal of the misfit by holding it in my hands and wiping my forehead as if perspiring. So I succeeded in witnessing a brilliant spectacle which since the deposition of Abdul Hamid is shorn of its glory. The short route was lined with troops—Turkish, Arab, Koord and others—moving to martial music barbaric in its notes to strangers' ears; high officers of state in resplendent uniforms awaited the Sultan's approach; then came the veiled women of the harem in broughams, which were ranged round the courtyard of the mosque, then, amid the shouts of the soldiers, "Padisha in chok yasha"—"Long live the Padisha," the Shadow of God, his open carriage surrounded by sleek eunuchs, came at a brisk pace. Then he entered the mosque to pray to the Substance. A blaze of colour; a shout; more music; then the return journey, when the Sultan took the reins; a memory that cannot fade.

Sir Edwin Pears, *doyen* of the English colony, and of high rank as an historian (witness his *Fall of Constantinople* which is the story of the infamous Fourth Crusade; and his *Destruction of the Greek Empire*) took me on a most delightful visit to Alexander Van Millingen, then Professor of History at Robert College, on the Bosporus. He, who had the annals of *Byzantine Constantinople* and of the *Byzantine Churches of Constantinople*—I quote the titles of his more important works—in the hollow of his hand, was my guide among the beauties and intricacies of the great church of the Divine Wisdom, St. Sophia. No words can convey the impression that comes to one who, realizing a dream of youthhood, stands in old age under the great dome of that wonderful, venerable building. And to have had all its details made clear by so expert an archæologist and historian was a privilege given to few.

As a boy to whom the Crimean War was the excitement of school days, it was a chance not to be lost to cross with Sir Edwin Pears from Europe to Asia to see the cemetery where thousands of British soldiers lie in unnamed graves. There also rest the remains of Professor Van Millingen's father, who was associated with Byron in the time of Greek independence, and afterwards was Court Physician to four Sultans.

Then, visiting the American College for Girls, the principal, Miss Patrick, D.Ph., beguiled me into a promise to lecture to the students when I came to Constantinople again. The promise was the easier to give because its performance seemed most improbable. But a happy fate took me there the following year as the guest of Mr. Frew, and I found myself facing a very receptive audience of girls of various Eastern nation-

alities (no Turks were admitted under the Hamidian régime) who were sufficiently educated to understand a talk on Man's early history in simple English. To me an experience as agreeable as it was unique.

Of course, Meredith must have his joke when I reported my return to England.

" You will be most welcome on Wednesday. You will tell me as much as discretion permits of your adventures in the harems of Constantinople, where you confess to have lost your heart. Poor Sultan ! "

INDEX

A

Afghan Boundary Commission, 89
Agnosticism, 60, 253
Ainger, Canon, 223, 262
Airy, G. B., 57
Aldeburgh, 1, 2, 6, 27, 34, 43, 74, 83, 84, 92, 99, 123, 130, 135, 139, 163, 169, 172, 177, 202, 221, 224
Allen, Grant, 21–36, 50, 52, 58, 62, 73, 83, 90, 96, 127, 133, 162, 167, 171, 183, 200, 202, 207, 239, 249, 258
Allen, Mrs. Grant, 23, 38
Amazing Marriage, 145
American College for Girls, 280
Ancestors, Worship of, 29, 77, 100, 136
Anderson, Rev. C., 165, 248–254
Angels at Mons, 56
Animism, 107
Arbitration, 240
Argon, 127
Arnold, Matthew, 46, 67, 150, 213, 248, 256
Asiatic Studies, 100
"Astrologer Royal," 57
Astrology, 236
Austin, Alfred, 149
„ L. F., 276

B

Bacon, Francis, 58, 103
Baptists, 8, 48, 72
Barrie, Sir J. M., 71, 222
Barton, Prof., 232
Bates, H. W., 54, 63–68, 162, 221
Beauchamp's Career, 148
Becke, Louis, 123, 129
Beehives, mourning on, 185
Bel and the Dragon, 212
Bell, Mackenzie, 197
Berthelot, 181
Besant, Sir W., 111, 157, 265
Bible reading, 5, 42
Bible in the School, 229
Bird, Dr. George, 267, 270
„ Miss, 267
Birkbeck Institute, 9
Black, William, 156
Blouët, Paul (Max O'Rell), 273
Blyden, Dr., 81
Book of Enoch, 127
Book of Jubilees, 127
Booth, Charles, 197
Born in Exile, 166
Borough English, 135
Borrow, George, 152, 218
Boulge, Rector of, 91
Bridgewater Treatises, 11
British Academy, 130
British Association, Oxford, 12
Brodie, Sir B., 87
Browne, Sir Thomas, 94
Browning and nerves, 26
„ John, 57
„ Robert, 125, 151
Browning Letters, 151
Buck, Joseph, 6
Buddhist Praying Wheel, 88
Budleigh Salterton, 166
Bunyan, John, 2, 126
Burford Bridge Hotel, 161
Burial Service, 116, 163
Burton, Sir R., 271
„ Lady, 271
Bury, Prof. J. B., 68
Butler, Samuel, 144, 254–263
„ „ and Chas. Darwin, 256
„ „ and Grant Allen, 258
„ „ and T. H. Huxley, 260
By the Ionian Sea, 194

C

Cable, G. W., 274–276
Calabria, 194

Callimachus, 164
Campbell, Sir G., 102
„ Thomas, 151
Cape Town, 140
Carlyle, Thomas, 9, 95, 96, 114, 148, 158, 189, 198
Carpenter, Edward, 55
„ J. Estlin, 233, 234
Cassiodorus, 181, 192
Caste, 102
Celeste, Madame, 9
Century Club, 254
Chalmers, Dr., 11
Chapman, John, 268
Charnock, Richard, 142
Childhood of the World, 19
Church Times, 195
Christian "fable," 153
Cicero, 34
City of God, 188
Clarke, Mrs. C., 143
Clericalism, 44
Clifford, Sir Hugh, 100
„ Prof. W. K., 17, 37–40, 254, 257
„ Mrs. W. K., 37, 43, 225
Clod, Charles, 2
„ Johanne, 2
Cobbold, Felix, 2
Colenso, Bishop, 13, 15, 251
Coleridge, Hon. S., 41
Commune, 113
Comparative Mythology, 208
Comte, Auguste, 115
Conrad, Joseph, 186
Constantinople, walls of, 278
Conway, Moncure D., 227, 237–242, 275
Corelli, Marie, 97, 158, 219
Corpus Poeticum Boreale, 122
Cotrone, 194
Cotton, J. S., 22, 83, 130
Cowley, Abraham, 145
Crabbe, 164, 217, 223
Crabbe's *Borough*, 2
Cremation, 47
Crimean War, 2, 86, 280
Crookes, Sir W., 55, 267
Curates Clerical Club, 251

D

Dakyn, Henry, 108
Daily Mail, 46
Darwin, Charles, 63, 66, 180, 251, 256
"De Montagu, Count," 244
De Rougemont, Louis, 123
Demonology, 107
Desiderium, 215
Dickens, 156, 170, 178
Dill, Sir S., 181
Don Quixote, 156, 185
Driver, Canon, 16, 201
Drummond, Prof., 266
Du Chaillu, Paul B., 69, 71–74, 75, 123
Dublin Review, 59
Durand, Sir Mortimer, 98, 99, 109
Dyer, Sir Thiselton, 90

E

Earstoppers, Spencer's, 50
Ecce Homo, 13, 243
Egoist, 148
"Electro-biology," 65
Eliot, George, 157, 246, 268
Ellis, S. M., 140
Elton, Charles, 136
„ Prof. O., 122, 124, 130
Emanuel, Walter, 97
Emerson, P. H., 128
„ R. W., 151
Encyclopædia Britannica, 117
Eno's Fruit Salt, 70
Erewhon, 144, 263
Essayists, prosecution of, 12
Essays and Reviews, 12, 15, 16, 243
Eucharist, 134, 210
Evan Harrington, 140, 148
Everton Toffee, 200
Evil eye, 70
Evolution of the Idea of God, 133, 169
Exodus, 234, 235

F

Fair Haven, The, 261
Farrar, F. W., 5, 167, 249
FitzGerald, Edward, 3, 89, 91, 92–98, 109, 130, 150, 157, 205, 217, 222, 237
„ Mrs. E., 223
„ Gerald, 157
„ John, 157
„ Maurice, 157
Flinders-Petrie, Prof., 121, 234, 235
Flint Cottage, 145, 163
Folk Lore Society, 135, 210, 221, 271
„ „ „ Presidential Address to, 21

Fontenelle, 209
Foote, G. W., 154
Fortnightly Review, 112, 144
Foster, Sir M., 38, 51
Framlingham, 1, 8, 46, 117, 275
Franklin, Sir John, 1
Frazer, Sir J. G., 134, 153, 183, 210
Freethinker, 154
Frew, Rev. Robert, 278
Froude, J. A., 125

G

Gadarene swine, 105, 129, 159
Galton, Sir Francis, 15
Garrick Club, 116
German critics, 201
„ shams, 127
Gibbon, 7, 67, 151, 154, 157, 195
Gipsy Tents, In, 220
Girl of the Period, 264
Gissing, Algernon, 166
„ George, 155, 161, 165–195, 248
Gladstone, W. E., 44, 105, 129, 134, 159, 210, 249
Glover, T. R., 181
God in Bible Legend, 18
Goethe, 99
Golden Bough, 79, 211
Gomme, Sir L., 134–137
Gorilla, 72
Gosse, Edmund, 90, 113
Grant Allen: a Memoir, 175
Gray's *Elegy*, 151
Great Exhibition, 8
Green, J. R., 251, 254*n*
Groome, Francis Hindes, 217–226
Gurdon, Lady E. C., 221
Gypsy Folk Tales, 225

H

Hack, Marie, 3, 11
Hall Caine, 97, 158
"Hannah," Jewess, 196
Hannah, Robert, 196
Hanno, 72
Hardman, Sir W., 138, 141
Hardy, Thomas, 34, 37, 67, 84, 85, 121, 146, 155, 161, 190
Harley, Dr., 113
Harrison, Frederic, 113, 165, 166, 198, 261
Harry Richmond, 148, 218
Hart, Sir R., 272
Hawkins, Rev. E., 154, 223, 224
Hay, John, 239
Haynes, E. S. P., 151
Helium, 127
Herodotus, 104
History of Early England, 122
Hobbes' *Leviathan*, 44, 107, 158
Holman-Hunt, Mrs., 278
„ „ William, 58, 111, 142, 150, 196–206, 247
Home, D. D., 55
Hornbooks, 6
Hours of Thought, 59
Howe, Prof. Ward, 239
Howorth, Sir H., 127
Hudson, Fred, 96
Huggins, Sir W., 54–57
Hughes, Prof. D. E., 271
Huxley, Leonard, 44, 46
„ Prof., 1*n*, 6, 12, 16, 29, 37, 40–46, 48, 51, 54, 79, 103, 105, 115, 158, 159, 177, 180, 227, 260
„ Mrs., poems by, 43

I

Ibsen, 126
Image, Selwyn, 252
Index Expurgatorius, 212
Iron as a charm, 229, 230

J

Jahweh, 233
Jamaica, 21, 23
James, Henry, 125, 268
Jameson raid, 149
Jebb, Prof., 104, 130
Jehovah-Shalom beetle, 68
Jesus College, 131
Jesus of Nazareth, 41, 213, 246
Jessopp, Canon, 154
Job, Book of, 9
Joshua Davidson, 269
Jowett, Prof., 9, 10, 13, 16

K

Kalee's Shrine, 26
Keary, C. F., 109, 170
Keats, 150, 224
Keble College, 197
Keltie, J. S., 77
Kelvin, Lord, 162
Kidd, Benjamin, 180
Kingsley, Mary H., 75–82
Kipling, Rudyard, 113
Knapp, Prof., 152

Knowledge, 56
Knowles, James Sheridan, 9
Kriegspiel, 218
Kropotkin, Prince, 30

L

Labouchere, H., 55
"Lady of Shalott," 199, 202
Laffitte, P., 112
Lang, Andrew, 27, 29, 67, 79, 81, 132, 169, 207–216, 218, 277
Lankester, Sir Ray, 275
Landor, W. S., 147, 266
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, 272
Lawton, B. T., 141
Layard, G. S., 266
Lee, Mr., 199
Legends, Bible, 17
Lewes, G. H., 157
Life and Habit, 256
"Light of the World," 197
Linton, W. J., 269
Liquor traffic, 77
Loder, John, 222
Lodge, Sir Oliver, 56
London Joint Stock Bank, 8, 56
Lowell, J. R., 239, 242
Lower Slopes, The, 32
Luck and Cunning, 250
Lugard, Major, 79, 80
Lyall, Sir Alfred, 75, 81, 99–110, 158, 228
Lynn, Mary, 93
Lynn Linton, Mrs., 37, 71, 248, 264–269

M

Macaulay, 114, 158
Madras, 238
Making of Religion, 212
Man's Place in Nature, 16
Manning, Cardinal, 114, 211
Martineau, Rev. J., 10, 59
Massingham, H. W., 34, 36, 123
Matterhorn, 83
Maxse, Admiral, 149, 255
"May Morning on Magdalen Tower," 203
Medusæ, 39
Meredith, Arthur, 143
,, Augustus, 140
,, Eliza, 144
,, George, 43, 116, 125, 138–164, 168, 171, 177, 181, 215, 247, 281
Meredith, Louisa, 140
,, Mary E., 143
,, W. M., 161
Meynell, Mrs., 151
Metaphysics, 9
Miall, Charles, 52
,, Edward, 52
Microphone, 271
Milman, Dean, 15, 67
Milton, 152
Miracles, 101, 105,
"Miracle of the Holy Fire," 199
Missionaries, 77, 101
Mivart, Dr. St. George, 212, 259
Mohammedanism, 70
Moncrieff, R. Hope, 244
Montaigne, 101, 211
Moor, Major, 93, 222
Morfill, Prof., 132
Morison, J. Cotter, 37, 51, 58, 111–121, 138, 154, 158, 163
Morley, Lord, 111, 116, 154, 156, 158, 165, 178
Morris, Rev. R., 28
Müller, Max, 28, 104, 132, 208
Myers, F. W., 211
Mystery of Creation, 103
Myth, Ritual and Religion, 212
Myths and Dreams, 78

N

Naishapur, 89, 91, 98
New Grub Street, 166, 194
New Republic, 195
Newgate Calendar, 152
Nevinson, H. W., 3, 153
Newman, Cardinal, 151
,, Prof. F. W., 244
Nicolls, Lady, 143
,, Lieut. 142
,, M. E., 142
Norbury Park, 139
Nonconformist Chapels, 10
Norton, C. E., 96

O

"Octaves," 46, 166, 198
Ogams, 133
Old and New Astronomy, 60
Omar Khayyám, Tomb of, 89, 98
Omar Khayyám Club, 32, 96, 109 161, 205, 227, 242
One of our Conquerors, 145
Ordeal of Richard Feveral, 148
Order of the Lion and the Sun, 98
Order of Merit, 147

Orford Castle, 275
Origin of Species, 11, 52
Other Worlds than Ours, 58
Owen, Sir Richard, 12, 129
Oxford, Bishop of, 107

P

Paley, 152
Palladino, Eusapia, 211
Pamela, 3
Pantheism, 101, 227, 234
Parnell, 144
Patrick, Miss, D.Ph., 280
Patti, Madame A., 245
Paston Letters, 117
Peacock, T. L., 142, 150
Pearce, Sir Robert, 196
Pears, Sir Edwin, 280
Phallic symbols, 87
Philochristus, 249
Physiological Æsthetics, 25
Picton, J. A., 5, 227–237
Pioneers of Evolution, 52, 236
Plutarch, 265
Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of Earth, 138
Pollock, Sir Frederick, 37, 39, 228, 234, 275, 276
Polonius, 226
Pond, John, 57
Popular Antiquities, Brand's, 70
Positivism, 115, 238
Powell, F. York, 37, 73, 76, 83, 111, 122–131, 147, 163
Pragmatism, 103
Praying Wheel, 88
Pre-Raphaelitism, 196, 199
Primitive Culture, 16, 17
Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft : (An Author at Grass), 166, 178, 181, 187
Privy Council, 13, 243
Proctor, R. A., 26, 56, 58–62, 221
Psalm of Montreal, 254
Psyche's Task, 153
Psychical Research, 109, 210, 214
Punch and Cremation, 47
,, and Huxley, 45
Purgatory, 102
Putnam, Dr. G. H., 122, 275
Pygmies, 72

Q

"Quaker Didson's Cordial," 30
Quatrains, of Omar Khayyám, 96
Quarterly Review, 160

R

Rachel Marr, 191
Rationalist Press Association, 154
Religion of Jesus, 227
,, ,, *the Universe*, 228, 232
Renan, Ernest, 45
Reuss, Dr., 201
Rhŷs, Sir John, 28, 73, 131–134
Richards, Franklin, 22
Richardson, Sir B. W., 35, 271
Robert Elsmere, 248
Roberts, Morley, 165, 191
Robertson, Sir G. S., 36, 275
Robinson, Lionel, 138, 140, 142, 258
Romanes, G. J., 38, 251, 258
Rome, 264
Roman Catholicism, 60, 102
Roncesvalles, 188, 190
Rosebery, Lord, 124
Rossetti, Christina, 197
,, Gabriel D., 149
Royal Niger Company, 80
,, Society, 45
Roth, Dr., 209
Ruskin, 111, 246

S

Sacred Anthology, 238
Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, 114
Saint Catherine, 168
,, John's Festival, 183
,, Paul's, Dean of, 204
,, Sophia, 280
Salarium, 117
Saliva-magic, 70
Salt, 118
Savile Club, 38, 51, 81, 113, 128, 211, 240, 258
Sayce, Prof., 104
"Scapegoat," 206
Scrambles Among the Alps, 83
Seeley, Sir John, 14, 250
Selamlik, 279
Sellar, Prof., 146, 207
Service of Man, 114
Shaftesbury, Earl of, 14
Shaving of Shagpat, 141
Shaw, Bernard, 126
Shelley, 150
Shenstone, 6
Ships as communal, 136
Shorter, Clement K., 32, 96, 143, 152, 161, 165, 220
,, Mrs. C. K., 155
Sidgwick, Henry, 108

Sime, James, 128
Similis, 184
Simpson, William, 69, 86–91, 98
Sirmione, 184
Slaughden Quay, 164, 223
Slavery, 8
Smith, Robertson, 213
,, Sydney, 106
Soldier's pay, 117
Soul, 56, 65, 101, 229
,, and breath, 133
,, weight of, 56
South Place Institute, 237, 242
South Sea Bubbles, 76
Spectroscope, 54
Spencer, Herbert, 25, 29, 50–53, 101, 174, 240, 251, 266
Spinoza, 40, 57, 228, 235
Spirit photographs, 56
Spiritualism, 65, 267, 271
Stanley, Dean, 10, 15, 46, 251
Stead, W. T., 240
Stephen, Sir Leslie, 25, 37, 103, 151, 152
Sterling, John, 51
Stevenson, R. L., 149, 157, 219
Story of the Alphabet, 175
,, ,, *Primitive Man*, 230
Sunday School, 3, 8
Sutro, A., 148 *n.*
Swinburne, A. C., 163, 266, 270

T

Taylor, Canon I., 27, 70, 74, 124
Tennyson, Alfred Lord, 150, 169, 207
,, Hallam, Lord, 109, 110
Terence, 145
Thackeray, 67, 156, 170
Theatres, 9
Theistic Church, 243
Thomas Henry Huxley, 129, 179
Thompson, Sir H., 46–49, 166
Thomson, G. W., 98
,, Joseph, 69–71
Tolstoy, 126, 170
Tom Tit Tot, 133, 229
Tout, Prof., 126
Trevelyan, G. M., 146
,, Sir G. O., 103, 240
Trinities, 101
Tylor, Sir E. B., 16, 81, 132, 213, 254

U

Unclassed, The, 165
Unitarianism, 59

V

Van Millingen, Prof., 278–281
Vaughan, Cardinal, 212
Veranilda, 156, 191
Victory, Statue of, 113
Vigfusson, G., 122, 128
Viking Age, The, 74
Viking ship, 136
Virgil, 92, 168, 191
Virgin Birth, 134
Vittoria, 142
Voysey, Rev. C., 243–247
Vulliamy, Miss, 144

W

Wagner, Frau, 160
Wallace, A. R., 25, 55, 56, 64, 65
Walpole, Horace, 9, 102
Ward, Mrs. H., 134
Watts, Dr., 220
Watts-Dunton, T., 218, 220
Waugh, Consul, 279
Way of All Flesh, 256
Weismann, 154, 221
Wells, H. G., 165, 180
Westbury, Baron, 13
Whale, George, 96, 275
Whiteing, R., 126 *n*
Whitman, Walt, 126
Whitsuntides at Aldeburgh, 34, 73, 99, 112, 167
Whymper, Edward, 35, 83–85
Wilberforce, Bishop, 12
Wilks, Mark, 10, 86, 227
Wise, T. J., 246
Wittenberg, 88
Woman Question, 162, 264
Woman who Did, The, 127, 225
Wood, Mrs., 144
Words and Places, 27
Workers in the Dawn, 165

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Aldeburgh
10/12/19

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Since you sent me your draft for consideration, I venture to append a version of it for the favour of your consideration.

The word "Fellow Countrymen" includes both men and women.

I fear that the Greek may be too long, so I suggest the lines from Ecclesiasticus. Ch XLIV. 14.

Yours sincerely
Edward

To the
Immortal Memory of
the (88?) Men of
Aldeburgh who fell in
the Great War 1914-1918
this
Monument
is dedicated by their
Fellow Countrymen.

—

"Their bodies are buried in
Peace and their name liveth
for Evermore."

at the going down of the
Sun & in the Morning we will
remember them
Who dies if England live

Let those who come after ~~know~~
See to it that their names be not forgotten